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REMINISCENCES

By

JUSTIN McCARTHY, M.P.
AUTHOR OF 'A HISTORY OF OUR OWN TIMES' ETC.

'From the table of my memory'

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
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TO

W. H. C. STAVELEY, Esq.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

BY HIS FRIEND

JUSTIN McCARTHY

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PREFACE

I FEEL sure that I shall not disappoint my readers when I make the preliminary announcement that these two volumes do not profess to be anything in the nature of an autobiography. One reason why I have not attempted an autobiography is that my life, in its own course, has been uneventful, and that I have no story to tell about it which could have any claim on public interest. Another reason is that it has been one of the happiest fortunes of my life to meet with a great many distinguished men and women about whom readers in general would be glad to hear anything than can be said in addition to what they know or have learned already. These volumes, therefore, are strictly reminiscences, recollections of the eminent persons with whom I have been brought into association, and not a record of my own otherwise unimportant doings. I have not even arranged these volumes with any careful attention to strict chronological order. Naturally they group themselves to some extent with regard to the general sequence of my opportunities, but my main idea has been simply to let the recollections follow any casual order of succession they were pleased to take, one memory growing out of another. Thus, I have sometimes, when recording my reminiscences of a meet-

ing which took place only a few years ago, been reminded of something that took place a long time before, and I have not hesitated to go back and revive the recollection, although coming thus out of its order in the succession of time. I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to keep politics out of my mind, at least when forming my estimates of public men, and I hope I have always had intelligence and fairness enough to appreciate the character and the abilities of men who have been the advocates of opinions which were never mine.

I wish to make some acknowledgments of kindly assistance given to me in the production of my volumes. Mr. John Albert Bright, for instance, has been good enough to allow me to publish some of the many letters which I received from his father, the late John Bright. Two of the personal descriptions which appear in the second volume, that of Mr. Dillon and that of Mr. Sexton, appeared in substance some few years ago in the columns of the 'Daily News,' and are, except for some slight alterations and additions, merely republished here. The conductors of the 'Daily News' have kindly given me their permission to reproduce these pages of personal description. The mention of the 'Daily News' reminds me of a certain fragment of autobiography which I take leave to introduce into my preface. For nearly a quarter of a century I was a regular contributor of leading articles to the 'Daily News.' My friend Sir John R. Robinson was then, as he is now, manager of the paper. More than twenty years ago a great firm of London publishers formed the idea of giving to the world a history of the present reign, and they asked the advice of Sir John Robinson as

to a likely man to undertake the work. Sir John Robinson was kind enough to suggest my name. For reasons which have in them no sort of public interest, the arrangement, although actually entered upon, did not come to completion, but 'A History of Our Own Times' grew out of Sir John Robinson's idea, and was given to the world by my own publishers, Messrs. Chatto and Windus. But for Sir John Robinson's friendly assurances that I could accomplish such a work I might never have made up my mind to go on with it, and I feel that I owe him much thanks for his encouragement.

I have written the whole of these two volumes of reminiscences under conditions I should think peculiarly favourable for such a work. They were written during gradually recovering health in the seclusion of a small sea-coast town or village remote altogether from the rush and movements of political and social life. For the first time since actual boyhood I have enjoyed continuous leisure, and have never been allowed to yield too much to the fascinations of literary work. If a man could not under such conditions indulge freely in reminiscences and enjoy the luxury of recalling the past and seeing it move before him with all its lights and shades, and scenes and figures, I do not see how he could well hope to give memory any fairer chance. One might surely, in such a state of unwonted ease and tranquillity, form a fair, unprejudiced judgment of the events in which he had taken a part, and of the men and women with whom he had been brought into association. Even since I began these volumes some of those with whom I have been associated in literature, in politics have passed away,

not without leaving a line of light behind them. The eminent men and women whom I mention in these volumes need no record from me. My only claim upon the reader's attention is that I have known them, and that I endeavour to tell him faithfully the impression they produced on me.

JUSTIN MCCARTHY.

WESTGATE-ON-SEA.

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REMINISCENCES

CHAPTER I

FIRST SIGHT OF LONDON

In the early days of February, 1852, a young man who had lately entered on his twenty-second year caught his first sight of London by gaslight from the top of an omnibus leaving Euston Square. This young man had arrived from Liverpool, travelling by the parliamentary train, as it was then called — in other words, a train composed wholly of third-class carriages — a train which occupied from early morning until late afternoon in traversing the distance between Lime Street, Liverpool, and Euston Station in London. The passengers by the parliamentary train had the advantage, if they were really anxious to see the country, of stopping every now and then, and being shunted at this or that station in order that the more favoured and expensive trains, which had only first and second class carriages, might be allowed to whirl by and pursue their rapid way. This was our young traveller's first visit to England, and he was not in the least disposed to find fault with any arrangement which gave him an opportunity of inspecting at his leisure any part of this new country.

Even the landscape around Crewe he was in a mood to look at with keen and gratified interest. Our traveller came from one of the most picturesque cities and rivers in the south of Ireland; but his heart was set just now on seeing London, and yet he did not even grumble at the delay which, keeping him back a little longer from London, allowed him to survey attentively any scrap of English soil. He was pretty well acquainted with English history and poetry and romance; and though everything he passed was new to him, even the country around Crewe Station he was able to fit in with some of the stories of English life which he knew so well and loved so much. Lest the reader should be deluded into the impression that he is about to read a new novel, I shall drop the story-teller's form at once, and merely say that the traveller by the parliamentary train was the writer of this book, on his way for the first time to London. For many years he had longed to see London, and had somehow made up his mind that he must settle in London some time, and live there by the writing of books. 'Even the Eastern Counties trains,' says Thackeray in one of his ballads, 'come in at last.' Even the parliamentary trains of 1852 came in at last; and so, on a raw evening drawing towards night, this traveller had the advantage of surveying for the first time some of the London streets from the top of an omnibus. Every one of those streets which I traversed was perfectly familiar to me, even then, by name and by various associations drawn from English histories and biographies and novels.

The general aspect of the streets of London was not very different in those days from what it is at present. Of course there was no Thames Embankment at that time, and there was no St. Thomas's Hospital on the

Surrey side of the river; Westminster Bridge and Blackfriars Bridge were very different structures from those which we call by such names at present; tolls were paid for the privilege of crossing some of the bridges; and it is needless to say that there was no Underground Railway. Northumberland House still occupied its place at Charing Cross, with its rigid lion looking westward; and Landseer's lions did not adorn Trafalgar Square; the hideous old National Gallery had not been reformed; Temple Bar for many long years after obstructed the traffic of the Strand and Fleet Street, and gave an occasion for one of John Bright's happy political illustrations. Holywell Street and Wych Street have changed their character since the days when I first saw London. I have seen a great many cities since those distant days; but I never saw in any town the abominations of sights which were on exhibition at that time in Holywell Street and Wych Street. I have to stop and deliberately recall my recollections of those streets to make sure that such sights were then really endured in broad daylight, close to the principal thoroughfares of a great civilised metropolis. But the ordinary life and the ordinary traffic of Oxford Street, of Holborn, of the Strand, and of Fleet Street, did not differ much in external appearance from that which we may see at the present day. The hansom cab was flourishing then; the kind of vehicle described in 'Pickwick,' where the driver's seat was on a level with, and at the side of, that of the fare, did not exist in my time; the good old growler was no whit more unsightly or more noisy than it is in our own age of advancing civilisation. The great traffic, of course, was done by means of heavy omnibuses — tramcars were the invention of a later day, and there were then no such things as

'garden-seats' on roofs of public conveyances; and women in those years never dreamed of riding outside. I need hardly say that there were no bicycles — there were not even any perambulators. But to look down upon the streets from the top of an omnibus in any of the ordinary great thoroughfares gave one a sight of very much the same sort of moving population that he can see at this day. Greater change has taken place in the outer aspects of the streets in New York during the last ten years than has taken place in London during the last forty-five years. At that time, however, I did not stop to criticise the streets — it was enough for me that they were the streets of London. Every spot I passed brought to me some association out of a book. The old inns on the south side called back Chaucer to my mind. The Temple Gardens were alive with Shakespeare and Addison and Dickens and Thackeray. Eastcheap was a place to linger in and to haunt, because of the memories of Prince Hal and Falstaff. One can never again feel as he felt when he first made holiday in London, especially if he were a bookish sort of young man who had filled his provincial life with associations drawn from English literature. I was not in London early enough to see the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park; but the Crystal Palace itself was still standing there, and it was something to have seen even that. During that fortnight's holiday I think I saw more of London — I mean of the streets of London — than I ever saw after, during my long years of London residence. I used to go from one end of the Metropolis to the other for nothing but the mere rapture of looking at the streets. Of course, however, I did not deny myself the parks and the river, and Richmond and Greenwich, and the picture galleries and the theatres.

The amusements of London have changed in character a good deal since that time. No such thing as an Alhambra or a Palace of Varieties, or even an Oxford Music Hall, had then come into existence. Opera-bouffe was not known, and the music hall in its modern sense was an undiscovered addition to civilisation. The Cave of Harmony, as it is called in 'The Newcomes' — in other words, 'Evans's' or 'Paddy Green's' Concert Hall and Supper Room in Covent Garden — was the place to which all country visitors were expected to rush, if only to prove on their return home that they had actually tasted the risky delights of metropolitan midnight revelry. There was a very popular entertainment known as 'the Judge and Jury,' afforded by some of the great taverns in the neighbourhood of the Strand. The entertainment consisted in a burlesque of some popular trial; the jury being selected from amongst the audience, and the judge and the rival lawyers being, if I may use the expression, retained on the premises. A good deal of humour and eloquence, which might under happier conditions have won for their possessors an honourable place at the Bar, was often wasted in these nightly buffooneries. Then there were the debating societies, the 'Temple Forum' in Fleet Street, and the 'Cogers' Hall' in the Shoe Lane region, at which the great public questions of the day were discussed; the orators who started each subject being rewarded by some system of free drinks, and any one of the audience who pleased being at liberty to take part in the debate. There is an admirable description given of one of these institutions in a novel called 'The Democracy,' written by my old friend Richard Whiteing many years ago; a book full of a grim realistic humour, sometimes not unworthy of Balzac, and made tender by many a touch

of genuine pathos. The great theatres of that time were the two opera houses, Covent Garden and Her Majesty's, and for the regular drama, Drury Lane, the Princess's, the Haymarket, the Lyceum, the Adelphi, the Olympic, and Sadler's Wells; and across the water, the Surrey Theatre and, of course, Astley's Amphitheatre. In the opera houses the stars of the first magnitude were Grisi, Alboni, Persiani — Adelina Patti had not yet risen on the horizon — Mario, Lablache, and Tamberlik. The popular actors were Charles Kean, who was then 'reviving' Shakespeare with limelight at the Princess's; Charles Mathews, the king of light comedians, at the Lyceum; Ben Webster, unrivalled in certain melodramatic parts, a genuine artist if ever there was one; Mr. and Mrs. Keeley; Buckstone; and, a little later on, that strange child of genius, Robson, who was a school of acting all to himself, who never had a predecessor and never had a successor. Macready had just taken his farewell of the stage at Drury Lane Theatre when I first visited London; and Phelps was still doing good work at Sadler's Wells. Helen Faucit was then the acknowledged English queen of tragedy.

The London streets, as I have said, looked on the whole very much as they might be seen to-day. Regent Street had but recently lost its double colonnade at the Quadrant, and therefore looked just as monotonous as it does at the present hour. The parks have naturally but little changed — I mean, of course, the ancient and historic parks; for Battersea Park was then only in process of conversion, Victoria Park was new and raw, and I think Kennington Common had not yet risen to the grandeur of its present designation. But there were some famous figures to be seen even then in Hyde Park which have long since passed into

history. Still, to adopt some words from a poem by my old friend Edmund Yates, 'through the green, the bowed form of The Duke was seen.' In the park and at the Horse Guards, people still looked out for the Duke of Wellington. I have seen him often in Whitehall or Piccadilly walking vigorously along in his blue coat and white duck trousers, or driving in that peculiar cab which he invented to suit his own ideas of comfort, ease, speed, and grace. Every one knew him, and almost every one saluted him as he passed. I shall have yet to tell of the one and only speech which I ever heard delivered by the great Duke of Wellington. Another figure familiar to any one who cared to watch the entrance to the House of Lords in Palace Yard, was that of Lord Brougham; that, indeed, was a figure which once seen could not easily be forgotten. Brougham, I should think, was about the worst dressed man who ever entered the House of Lords. I used to wonder, as I saw him, where he got his hat made, that queer old shapeless beaver hat — are there any beaver hats in existence now? — with the thick fur apparently all rubbed the wrong way. Brougham, whenever I saw him, always wore the shepherd's plaid trousers with which 'Punch' made the public of that time thoroughly familiar. A face less favoured by Nature than Brougham's it would be hardly possible for the perverted ingenuity of a caricaturist to conceive. His movements were awkward; his gestures were uncouth, grotesque, and sometimes even startling in their sudden and unpicturesque emphasis. I am now only speaking of Brougham's appearance — about Brougham as he looked when one passed him in the street. I shall have something to say about him as an orator later on, and about my own brief and slight acquaintance with him. The Prince Consort

I saw several times in London during my first visit or two; and I was much impressed, as almost everybody was, by the somewhat melancholy beauty of his intellectual face.

One impression I brought away with me from my first holiday in London, and it lingers in my memory still as an odd and very distinct reminiscence. About that time there was a sort of mania in London among what we should now call smart young men in the West End, for the smoking of short clay pipes. I do not merely mean the use of these clay pipes in the smoking rooms of clubs or private houses; but the open, unabashed, and deliberate use of them in the public streets. It was for the moment thought quite the right sort of thing for a man of fashion to appear in the broad day with a clay pipe in his mouth. Many a young man strove to pass off on the public as a youth of fashion by the simple artifice of carrying a short clay pipe stuck in his mouth as he sauntered along Regent Street or drove in a patent safety cab down Piccadilly. I am not certain but that, after the great public buildings and the famous places pictured in history and illumined in romance, the one thing in London which most impressed my youthful and provincial mind was this adoption of the short clay pipe as an emblem of fashion. The whim, no doubt, soon passed away; and it has not, so far as I know, come up into social existence again; but it was one of the peculiar humours of that time, and I remember that on returning to my home I found it hard to make simple folks believe that my account of the clay pipe in the West End of London was not one of the travellers' tales which home-keeping provincials feel bound to detect and to resent.

I have said that I had two purposes in view when I

paid my first visit to London — the first purpose was to see London, that and nothing more; but behind that, vaster and vaguer than that, was the ambition to be a settled resident of London, and to write for newspapers and magazines, and even to be the author of books. My literary outfit for a career in London journalism consisted of a tolerably good literary education and a certain mastery of shorthand. In Ireland, during my younger days, men of my creed were cut off from any share in the honours and the practical advantages of a university education. A Catholic might, of course, study at Trinity College, Dublin, and get the best education it could give him; but a Catholic could get no honours from his study there; and the study could advance him in no manner towards a professional career. My people had not money enough to spend on sending me to Trinity College merely for the sake of the teaching that I could get there; and so I was forced to be content with such education as I could obtain at a private school. Luckily for me the classical school to which I was sent was one taught by a fine old scholar who was able to give me a good literary instruction in Greek and Latin; and I may say that I never became what is called a scholar in any language, even English. I had from my childhood an immense love for the reading of books, and no taste whatever for the scientific study of grammar. If I liked a book I was ready to go through any toil to become master of its contents; but the old-fashioned prosaic way of approaching a classical language by long preliminary mechanical burrowings in the grammar was particularly distasteful to me. My teacher, although, as I have said, really a scholarly man himself, still had to keep to the old-fashioned ways; and until we had drudged through what seemed to us an immense

amount of work in the grammar we were not allowed to begin the reading of a book. All this was exactly opposed to my impatient notions. My idea was to get an author and a dictionary and go on as best I could to find out the meaning of the one by the help of the other. Thus I studied Julius Cæsar at home after school hours by myself because the book fascinated me, and I wanted to get on with it, not troubling myself any more about the grammar than was necessary in order to know whether the author was speaking in the present or past tense and was using the singular or the plural number. Of course, my grammatical studies of the day — my day's drudgery, as I used to call it then — could not but help me forward in my purely literary studies at evening; and thus before I got into Cæsar as a class book at the school I had read through the whole volume somehow — reading it as a delightful military story — and got a full idea of its meaning. The book delighted me — enraptured me. Many years after, when I was talking to an elderly friend about the study of Latin, he seemed somewhat amazed at the fluency with which I read the language and the many mistakes I made in trying to speak it: and he asked me who had taught me Latin. I could not help answering with a certain air of triumph, 'Julius Cæsar.' My elderly friend thought I was making rather a poor joke; but indeed it was not quite a joke; and if Julius Cæsar had not so attracted me at the beginning of my studies, I doubt whether I should ever have learned to read Latin and Greek with fluency. Most of my reading of the classics I did at home; and I read all the Latin and Greek books which came within my reach. The great Latin authors I became able to read just as readily and as easily as I could read Shakespeare or Walter Scott;

and Greek at that time I could translate almost equally well. Some years later on, after I had entered upon a regular career as a journalist, I found that I was losing hold of my Greek. The discovery came upon me with a shock. I had dropped out of the habit of reading Greek books, and one day, taking up a volume of some Greek author at the house of a friend, I found that I had the greatest difficulty in making out the meaning of the page at which I had opened. I made up my mind that that falling away must be recovered, and I set myself to work to read some Greek every day. During many of those days I was so closely occupied in the work of a provincial reporter that I could sometimes only spare ten minutes for my daily reading of Greek; but I stuck to my purpose nevertheless, finding ten minutes, or even five minutes, much better than nothing; and I held on until I found that I could once again read with facility a page of Sophocles or of Plutarch. In just the same way I learned other languages, French and German and Italian, always eager to get at what the author had to tell me, and paying, I am afraid, far too little attention to anything like a scholar's mastery of the language. Mine, in fact, was a literary education altogether, the sort of education inspired and directed by a love of reading for reading's own sake. The only science of which I knew anything was astronomy; and even that I knew in a literary and picturesque rather than a scientific sense. One way and another I had made myself acquainted, and in many cases well acquainted, with all the great authors of Greece and Rome, of England and France, of Germany and Italy. This, then, was the sort of literary outfit with which I hoped to make a way for myself into London journalism and English literature. Of course, I had made many

attempts at writing for magazines before I became a resident of London. But, except for some youthful essays and poems published in local newspapers by the good-nature of the editors, I had not got anything into print up to the time of my first visit to London. Looking back now on my early efforts, I feel almost lost in wonder at the want of judgment which I showed in the directing of some of my experiments. Even a youth brought up in Cork city, in the south of Ireland, might have known that Dickens's 'Household Words' was not exactly the sort of publication to which a bundle of translations from Uhland's Ballads would be acceptable. I know, however, that I was much disappointed when I received a letter very politely worded from the editor informing me that as a rule he did not make use of translated verses. I sent to a well-known publisher in London the opening chapters of a translation from Jean Paul Richter's 'Levana'; and no doubt I felt surprise and regret when the publisher kindly informed me by letter that he did not think the experiment would prove a paying speculation. To a London magazine of that time — a magazine devoted altogether to smart essays about London life and London society, about St. James's and St. Giles's — I forwarded a short biography of Regnard, the French dramatic poet: and I forwarded it on the strength of Voltaire's declaration that 'the man who does not appreciate Regnard will never appreciate Molière.' I came to know some of the principal contributors to the magazine long after, and I am sure that they appreciated Regnard and Molière; but the conductors of the periodical did not seem to think that a lengthened story of Regnard's life would be likely to attract their monthly readers. Remembering this experiment, I have often since thought of Thackeray's

amusing essay about the early career of the 'Cornhill Magazine,' and about the lady who favoured its editor with the suggestion that a translation of Fénelon's 'Télémaque' would make a most interesting serial for the new periodical. All these descriptions of my early studies and efforts I only introduce here for the sake of letting the reader know what sort of young man it was who thus came to London for the first time with the intention of becoming a London journalist and an author. I may say that I had on my first visit no friends in London who could be of much use to me in my attempts at a literary career; and I was handicapped, in the opinion of many of my friends at home, by the fact that I was a Catholic by religion and an ardent Irish Nationalist in politics. With the remark that I never found either of these conditions to interfere in the slightest degree with my way in journalism or in literature here in England, I may perhaps return from this personal digression and go on with my early experiences in London.

CHAPTER II

FIRST GLIMPSES AT PARLIAMENT

I NEED hardly say that on my first visit to London one of my most earnest desires was to see something of the Houses of Parliament. The first chance I got introduced me as a spectator to the House of Lords. I was much more eager to hear a debate in the House of Commons; but at that time, as might well happen now on most occasions, it was easier to get into the Gallery of the House of Lords than into that of the House of Commons. Unless on the occasion of some great expected debate, there was then — and the condition remains much the same to this day — no passionate desire on the part of the public to obtain a seat in the Strangers' Gallery of the House of Lords. A friend who was connected with the reporting staff of a morning paper obtained a place for me in the Gallery of the Peers, and it looked at first a very dull and disappointing assembly on which I was privileged to gaze, and some of whose utterances I might strive to get hold of as well as I could. There were only a few Peers present; and the debate seemed to be dry and dull. The House was in Committee and was examining into the details of some legislative measure which did not seem to possess quite a national importance. I might have felt sadly disappointed and disheartened but that the obliging attendant who showed me to my

seat told me that the Duke of Wellington was in his place and indicated to me where the great old soldier was sitting. It would be needless to say that my interest was now excited to the uttermost, and that I watched the Duke as he sat with bowed head and stooping shoulders, and revelled in a sense of positive wonder at my own good fortune to be there and to see him. There sat the victor of Waterloo — the man who had dethroned the great Napoleon. I was egotistic enough to exult in my own mind, even then, over the important figure which I should be certain to make among my friends in my native city when I got back there to tell them that I had seen the Duke of Wellington sitting in the House of Lords.

But I did not merely see the Duke — I also heard him. I heard him make a speech; and although it was but a short speech and not remarkable for eloquence, it astonished and impressed me more at the time than the greatest oration by the greatest parliamentary orator could have done. The Duke, as I gathered from the speech of another peer — a law lord I think it was — had already been offering to the House his opinion on the measure under consideration, and the noble and learned lord was now criticising his remarks. In the course of his criticism this noble and learned personage ventured on the observation that he feared 'the illustrious Duke' had not quite understood the measure now before the House. This drew the illustrious Duke. The Duke of Wellington sprang to his feet to reply, and he struck the table with indignant gesture. 'My Lords,' he said, 'the noble and learned lord has said that I don't understand this Bill. Well, my Lords, all I can say is that I read the Bill once, that I read it twice, that I read it three times, and if after that I don't

understand the Bill, why then, my Lords, all I have to say is that I must be a damned stupid fellow.' Then the Duke resumed his seat, and that was the only speech I ever heard him deliver.

My first experience of a debate in the House of Commons was peculiar. I obtained an order for the Strangers' Gallery from one of my earliest and best friends, the late John Francis Maguire. I entered the gallery breathless with emotion — in almost an agony of expectation. Which of the great orators was it likely I should hear first? Palmerston, or Lord John Russell, or Gladstone, or Disraeli, or Cobden, or Bright? For a while the beating of my own heart was all the sound I heard. At last my pulses began to grow calmer; and I could listen — could distinguish tones. By degrees it began to be borne in upon me that these particular tones were familiar to me — ah, only too familiar. We had in the south of Ireland a local magnate who represented one of the constituencies in Parliament. He was a most worthy man, an excellent man; but, unfortunately he was very fond of making speeches; he spoke at vast extent; he was a very dull speaker; and, in short, he was a terrible bore. I hardly ever attended a meeting in the south of Ireland which was not graced by the presence of this distinguished person: and he never went to any meeting without making a speech there: and he never in his life made a speech that was not long. A reporter once said of him that he was a man who could not say what o'clock it was under two columns. It was my compatriot who was on his legs and was addressing the House of Commons when I came in to hear my first debate. Had I, then, left my native country and the friends of my youth, and, led by a wild ambition, come to listen to a Parliamentary

debate only to hear this dreadful bore whom I used to hear at least once a day on an average while I was still in Ireland? Yes! and he talked on and on; and an hour went by and there seemed no likelihood of his bringing his oration soon to an end; and I could not stand it; I became angry as well as disappointed; and I left the gallery in my wrath and thereby forfeited my place there; and I wandered into the streets depressed and disconsolate. That was my first experience of the House of Commons.

I began soon to know it better. The telegraph system was then coming into operation for the reporting of great parliamentary speeches in the interest of provincial newspapers. I had meanwhile obtained an engagement in Liverpool, and the newspaper to which I was attached tried to distinguish itself in that way. The attention of the whole country turned towards the Budget speech of Mr. Gladstone in the spring of 1854.

The Crimean war was on the verge of breaking out, and it was felt that Mr. Gladstone's financial scheme could not but be affected by the impending crisis. In any case, Mr. Gladstone's fame was lighting up splendidly, and when he spoke, all England listened. It was therefore resolved that we should have a telegraphed report of the Budget speech. Three reporters were to go up to town, of whom I was one. The question arose — how were we to get into the House? We could not get places in the Reporters' Gallery — at that time there was no idea of finding seats there for representatives of the provincial press. Mr. Cardwell, the late Lord Cardwell, was applied to. He was then one of the members for Liverpool. It was pointed out to him that it was of the utmost importance that the merchants and traders of Liverpool should have the earliest

and fullest report possible of such a speech on such an occasion. Mr. Cardwell undertook to work the negotiation for us, and he was successful. The three reporters went up to London; and in the House of Commons were shown the arrangement that had been made. We were aghast when we saw the places set apart for us. In a little corridor behind the last row of the Strangers' Gallery, walled off from the ultimate limit of the House itself by the partition of the Strangers' Gallery; set thus far behind the worst placed visitor to the remotest gallery, and with the partition, made to some extent of glass, further shutting us off — thus we were to take our notes of Mr. Gladstone's speech. A little table was set out for us with a lamp upon it, and that was all. We were accompanied by the then First Commissioner of Works, who was very courteous and good-natured. We expressed to him our disappointment and alarm. He only smiled and said, 'You need not be afraid; you will hear every word Mr. Gladstone says.' So he went his way and left us to our fate.

Never have I felt more nervous. Every second that passed made me feel more and more alarmed, more and more despondent. There was a rather long list of questions to be got through before the Chancellor of the Exchequer could begin his speech, and we found, to our horror, that we could hardly hear a word of either question or answer. Each question was then read out in its fulness. Each questioner did not then merely get up and say, after our present fashion, 'Mr. Speaker, I beg to ask the Right Honourable Gentleman the Secretary of State question number ——;' whatever the number might happen to be. As each member read out his question, and each reply was given, our hearts

kept sinking. We did not then know that questions are nearly always asked and answered in mumbling tones by members of the House of Commons. Even men who have clear and powerful voices get into the way of talking to their beards, as the Eastern phrase would put it. One little gleam of encouragement shone upon us. A question which we could not hear was answered by a Minister who spoke with the utmost apparent ease, but who, nevertheless, was perfectly audible to us far remote listeners. An attendant who was near told us that was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Gladstone. Our spirits rose; a load was lifted off our breasts.

Soon the last lingering doubt was dispelled, for Mr. Gladstone began his great Budget speech. Not one single word of that speech was lost on us. The orator did not seem to be making the slightest effort, and yet his voice came soaring up to our far-off eyrie, not a half-note failing to reach our ears. Nor did he seem to be speaking deliberately for the sake of making himself heard. Sometimes the words came pouring out like a torrent, but never was any word inaudible; never did any word get mixed up with or run into another word. Oh! how unspeakably grateful we felt to Mr. Gladstone; how we gladdened doubly in his eloquence because of his voice and his elocution; how happy we felt, now that we could accomplish our mission with perfect success and return home in triumph! Mr. Gladstone had a houseful of admirers that night, but he had, I am well satisfied, no such devoted admirers among them all as the three Liverpool reporters behind the Strangers' Gallery. Other men were delighted with his eloquence; we regarded ourselves as rescued by it.

Two years after, we three were to go up to London

for the Budget. We went up this time under what seemed to be happier auspices. We had succeeded in obtaining tickets of admission for that one night to the back seats of the Reporters' Gallery. We were to be admitted one at a time. We felt a little nervous, but, naturally, much happier than the former year in our far-off seats; but our hopes were soon sadly dashed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer this year was not Mr. Gladstone, but Sir George Cornewall Lewis. I sat in the outer room waiting and watching the clock. At a certain moment I was to go into the gallery and take the place of one of my comrades, who was at once to come out. The moment arrived, and I went in. I had never been in the Reporters' Gallery before, and felt confused and dazed by the novelty of the situation. My comrade had instantly to give his place to me and leave the gallery; but as he passed he had time to turn on me a countenance of despair. What had gone wrong? At first I was too anxious about settling into my place to think of what was going on; but when I did settle down I began to ask myself what had become of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Budget speech. Then I saw that all the reporters in the front seats, the men trained to the ways and the voices and the acoustics of the House, were craning and straining forward in their places, and holding their hands to their ears, and now and then dashing down a hasty word or two in their notebooks; and then I was aware, as the old writers put it, of a kind of muttering or whispering that was going on in the region of the Treasury Bench. I listened, and I found that now and then — at rare intervals — the full formation of a whole word reached my anxious ears. Now and then, too, some fragments of figures and arithmetical calculations seemed to be

flung upwards in our direction; and at length my mind had to settle down to the conclusion that this was the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget speech, and that, to use a homely phrase, 'I could not make head or tail of it.'

Here again Mr. Gladstone came to the help of his three unknown admirers from Liverpool; for he did us the unspeakable favour of rising to criticise the propositions of the Budget, and he spoke at considerable length, and in short he let us know what the Budget was all about. I remember feeling bitterly wroth with Sir George Lewis at the time, as if he ought to have had a good voice and a clear delivery for our sakes. Afterwards, when I had to be a regular attendant of the House of Commons, I became a great admirer, not only of the abilities and argumentative power, but even of the eloquence of Sir George Lewis; for it was eloquence — for those who could hear it. On that occasion of the Budget speech I was badly placed — in the back seats; and he was unusually nervous; and even in the front seats he could only barely be heard in parts, and sometimes was not heard at all. But in ordinary times, one who sat in the front seat of the Reporters' Gallery could hear Sir George tolerably well — could hear, at all events, the greater part of his speech. He was, I think, the best speaker with the worst delivery I ever heard. His voice was thin, weak, and monotonous; it had not a note of music in it. His delivery was singularly ineffective; it was not, indeed, so bad as that of Sir Charles Wood, whose Budget speeches I have heard; but then Sir Charles could not have been called an orator if he had had the voice and delivery of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright, whereas Sir George Lewis only wanted voice and delivery to take his place among

the greatest parliamentary debaters of the time. His language was always happily chosen; there was an exquisite felicity in some of his phrases and expressions; his illustrations were various and always well timed and effective, and they were drawn at will from history, from poetry, from the drama, from the experiences of real life. He seemed a man who could not, if he tried, put anything in a commonplace way. His argument was ingeniously persuasive, almost always convincing. He had the manner of one who was steadily excavating bit by bit the ground beneath the position which his antagonist had taken up, so that the antagonist must needs come tumbling, before long, under your very eyes. So far as my own personal experience goes, I can only say that I have never but twice been completely converted from what I believed to be a settled conviction; and each time the conversion was wrought by a speech from Sir George Lewis. I am not wishing it to be understood that I have not had my opinion changed on many other subjects as well as these two by the influence of an orator; but what I mean is, that Sir George Lewis is the only speaker who ever found me of one strong opinion on some particular subject, and on two separate occasions completely brought me round to an entirely different opinion — that is, his own opinion — by the sheer force of sustained argument.

I have already spoken of a slight personal acquaintanceship I had with Lord Brougham. The acquaintanceship began in this way. The Social Science Association, a body then only a few years in existence, held its congress in London in 1862. The congress was held in the Guildhall, where a separate room was allotted to each of the different sections into which the consultations of the society were divided. I was then

settled in London as a worker on the daily press; but I attended the sittings in the Guildhall merely in my private capacity as a member of the association. In the section over which Lord Brougham himself presided there was an interesting discussion on some question which had to do with the proper division of fiscal burdens in a State. I heard soon what I conceived to be some astonishing heresies propounded; and I was fresh from the study of Stuart Mill, had made a fair repute as a talker in a Cork debating society, and with what Henri Murger calls 'the insensate heroism of a young man,' I thought myself equal to any debate. So I jumped up and fired off a speech, and I was greatly pleased when the speech came to an end without any interference from the powers above, or even on the part of the assembly itself, to punish me for having made myself ridiculous. After a while there came a short adjournment for luncheon, and I wandered about the Guildhall in search of a refreshment bar. I found one at last, and was about to take my place in front of it when a singular figure startled me. There stood Lord Brougham with his hat thrown far back upon his head, and he grasped in one hand an emptied wineglass, while in the palm of the other he displayed some coins — change apparently, which he held up to the eyes of the girl in charge of the bar with the indignant gesture of a London cabman who exhibits what he conceives to be an unsatisfactory fare, and asks indignantly, 'What's this?' I was inclined to draw back and wait for a more favourable moment before obtruding my modest demand, when Lord Brougham's eyes suddenly turned on me, and he put his glass on the counter, and still holding the change in one hand, he rushed up to me, clutched my arm with

that fussiness and fury of gesture which were peculiar to him, and he uttered the words, 'I say, you made a devilish clever speech; I didn't agree with all of it — in fact, some of it was nonsense — but it was a damned clever speech. Who the devil are you?' I was too much abashed for the moment to be able to make any answer; and when I did mention my name it conveyed, of course, no manner of idea to Lord Brougham; but he talked to me in most kind and encouraging fashion. As I left him I felt a very rapture at the compliment, qualified though it was, which had been paid to me; and I received after that time more than one kindly word of encouragement from Lord Brougham. I doubt whether any praise ever given to any mortal could have made that mortal more pleased and proud than Lord Brougham's words made me on that day. Addressing public audiences, parliamentary and other, has been a part of my business of life since that far-off time; and I have sometimes thought in reflective moments that if my audiences now and then got tired of me, they might, if they had only known, have put part of the blame upon Lord Brougham; for I think his rough and sudden encouragement had a good deal to do in shaping the course of life which conducted me to so many public platforms here and in the United States, and to the benches of the House of Commons.

I had heard Lord Brougham speak many times before that day when he presided over the Social Science Association in the Guildhall; I had heard him in the House of Lords; and I had heard him in 1858 when he presided over the Congress of the Social Science Association in Liverpool. I remember a curious incident which happened during this Liverpool meeting. There was a great banquet given in St. George's Hall to cele-

brate the occasion, at which, of course, Lord Brougham was the most conspicuous figure. He seemed then to most of us younger people the very oldest man we had ever seen. He was very old, in fact; but despite his wonderful energy and even vivacity of manner, he looked still older than his years. His face seemed to have lost all trace of what might be called complexion, and the deep wrinkles that lined it appeared as if they were made of leather. Towards the close of the banquet a figure suddenly came up behind Lord Brougham's chair — the figure of a bald-headed man in a black skull-cap; a man who looked as far beyond Lord Brougham in years as Lord Brougham himself seemed to be beyond the average of the company. This mysterious person leaned over Lord Brougham's shoulder and at once engaged him in deep talk. Apparently he had announced himself or explained himself to Lord Brougham, and Brougham was deeply interested in him, and a conversation of seemingly intense interest went on between them, during which for the moment they appeared to forget the surrounding company and everything else but themselves. Inquiries went rapidly round here and there as to the identity of the mysterious stranger in the skull-cap, who seemed to have come from some far older world than that to which even Lord Brougham belonged. I remember that one facetious person sitting in my near neighbourhood suggested that it was probably Lord Brougham's grandfather, who, on his way to London from the north, had broken his journey at Liverpool for the sake of interchanging some words with his grandson. An entirely new feeling of interest, deeper and higher than that of mere curiosity, was aroused among us when we learned who the mysterious visitor was.

It was Robert Owen, the once famous Robert Owen of the Lanark Mills, and of New Harmony in Indiana — Robert Owen the dreamer and the worker, who went about the world with his socialistic ideas, which he tried to convert into practical economic realities, and who found the actual conditions of life too strong for his theories, and still strove on with his calculations very much after the fashion of one who should devise a theory of mechanism, taking no account meanwhile of the operation of ordinary friction. Owen had very likely got hold of some right ideas, but he could not, under the best of conditions, have made them to fit in with the working principles of life; and so even the best of his schemes was doomed to utter failure. He had got hold of many wrong ideas, too, which only failed in becoming failures — if I may use such a form of expression — because they never could be brought to any working test which afforded even an opportunity for their exposure as fallacies. That was the last chance most of us had of seeing Robert Owen, for he died within little more than a month after his sudden and strange appearance behind Lord Brougham's chair. At the time of that appearance he was, I think, some eighty-six or eighty-seven years old; but I must say he looked even older than that. Long afterwards I met his son, the late Robert Dale Owen, another thinker and dreamer, but of a different kind, in the United States, where he had many a circle of votaries. I never met him without finding my mind carried back to that banquet in Liverpool, where his father suddenly appeared behind Lord Brougham's chair and made Lord Brougham seem for the moment rather a young man by his mere presence.

We have had no orator in the least like Lord

Brougham since the close of Brougham's public career. Everything that Nature could do, so far as appearance, manner, and voice were concerned, she had done to prevent him from being a great orator; and yet, a great orator he undoubtedly was. I wonder what the House of Lords just now would think of a peer who gesticulated and bellowed as Brougham was in the habit of doing. But it was impossible to listen to Brougham and not to be carried away by the force of his intellect, by his torrent of words, by the sudden whirl and eddy of his rapid illustrations, and by the longer or shorter stretches of quietude and repose into which his argument occasionally flowed. I never could admire Brougham's style as a writer; and I suppose, if one could have listened to him and kept composedly thinking and criticising all the time, a listener of refined taste would not have admitted him to be a great orator; but his claim to be admitted a great orator was established by the manner in which he carried his listeners along with him and allowed them no pause for criticism and no rest for thought.

CHAPTER III

THE PRINCES OF LITERATURE

When I first settled in London, England was under the sway of a great literary triumvirate: Dickens, Thackeray, and Tennyson. At that time, and for long after, Browning was but the leader of a select few. Even Tennyson's popularity did not equal that of Thackeray and did not come anywhere near that of Dickens. I am not now entering into any comparison or criticism of the men as intellectual forces; I am speaking only of the hold they had on the public mind. Dickens, of course, was by far the most popular of the three; no one since his time has had anything like the same degree of popularity. No one born in the younger generation can easily understand, from any illustration that later years can give him, the immensity of the popular homage which Dickens then enjoyed. I had many opportunities of meeting Dickens, and of course I heard all of his readings and heard him deliver several after-dinner speeches. Let me say at once that he was the very best after-dinner speaker I ever heard; I do not quite know whom I should put second to him. Sometimes I feel inclined to give Mr. James Russell Lowell that second place, and sometimes my mind impels me to give it to Lowell's countryman, Mr. Chauncey Depew. But, so far as my judgment can go, there is no difficulty about awarding the first place to

Dickens. His voice was rich, full, and deep, capable of imparting without effort every tone and half-tone of emotion, pathetic, inspiriting, or humorous, that any spoken words could demand. His deep eyes seemed to flash upon every listener among the audience whom he addressed. I have no doubt that his after-dinner speeches were prepared in some fashion, but they carried with them no hint of preparation. They seemed to come from the very heart of the speaker and to go straight to the heart of the listener. I heard him make his famous speech at the dinner of the Press Fund, in which he described with so much humour and so much vividness, and with so many sudden gleams of unexpected pathos, some of his own experiences as a reporter; and although most of us in that company were newspaper men in whose minds speechmaking had become somewhat too closely associated with mechanical taskwork, I think we were all of us alike carried away by the extraordinary charm of that speech. Dickens's readings seemed most of them in their way inimitable, but I generally found that I could criticise them as I could not criticise his after-dinner eloquence. I am not, however, concerned in this place to criticise Dickens as a reader any more than I should think it necessary to give my opinion of him as a writer; I am only endeavouring to recall, for the benefit of those much younger than I, some of the impressions I formed of Dickens as a speaker and as a man.

I have said that I had many opportunities of meeting Dickens; but I should say that my acquaintance with him was very slight and superficial. I used to feel very proud when he shook hands with me and remembered my name and asked me how I was getting on, or some question of that sort; but I never could pretend to have

been ranked even in the outermost circle of his friends. I was not merely a young man, but a totally obscure young man, and had nothing whatever to recommend me to Dickens's notice except the fact that I belonged to the staff of a daily newspaper. To say the truth, Dickens rather frightened me; I felt uneasy when he spoke to me, and did not quite see what business I had to be speaking to such a man. His manner was full of energy; there was something physically overpowering about it, as it then seemed to me; the very vehemence of his cheery good-humour rather bore one down. From the first he appeared to me to be a man with whom I could not venture to differ on any subject. Then again, as was but natural, he was generally surrounded by a crowd of young men who sincerely worshipped him, and to whom indeed he seemed to represent all literature. I know how kind and friendly and encouraging he was to many men as young as I was, and whose very first efforts in literature received his helping hand — I knew many such young men, and they were never tired of telling me how kind he was, and how gentle, how 'quick to encourage and slow to disparage,' if I may adopt certain words which I think were used by himself when speaking of another leader of literature. But I am only putting down my impressions just for what they are worth, as the phrase goes, and indeed they are worth nothing at all except as impressions, and I can only say that Dickens somehow or other always made me feel rather afraid.

Another man who always made me feel afraid was Thomas Carlyle; but that was in quite a different way. Carlyle had a fashion of expressing his opinions which was likely enough to make any modest young beginner in the literary craft think twice before he ventured on

the expression of any views of his own in the presence of such a master. Perhaps I ought to explain here that when I spoke of the literary triumvirate who then ruled over England I was not forgetting the rule of Thomas Carlyle. Such a forgetfulness would be impossible; but I felt that his was not by any means a purely literary force, but something quite different, something like that of a philosopher with his school. To return, however, to my immediate subject, I should say that the dread I felt of Dickens was not at all like the dread I felt of Carlyle. In the case of Carlyle I did not like to run the risk of being snubbed; in Dickens's case I knew there was no such risk — I knew that he was far too sweet and kindly in nature to snub me, but the very exuberance of his good humour bore me down and kept me in my modest place.

I cannot explain why it was that I never felt the same kind of awe or awkwardness in the presence of Thackeray. One might have thought that Thackeray's presence would have been more inspiring of awe to a young and thoroughly obscure man. Thackeray was much taller than Dickens; his form, indeed, approached to the gigantic in its proportions; he looked far older, although the two men were much about the same age; his immense head, his broad forehead, and his prematurely white hair, gave him an appearance of authority, and even of severity, which one might have thought would prove intimidating to a stranger. Yet I at least never felt it so. He seemed to me to be less self-assertive, less conscious of his superiority, than Dickens appeared to be. I never had the good fortune of approaching to intimacy with Thackeray — the chance that at one time opened upon me was reduced to nothing by the Fates, and its memory has left an indelible

impression on my mind. I had met Thackeray in a casual way several times; but I never was a pushing sort of person, and indeed I idolised Thackeray and Dickens far too much to think of pushing myself on either of them. A literary controversy on some question which has now lost all its importance sprang up in 1863, and I wrote something anonymously in the 'Morning Star' which had the good luck to please the author of 'Vanity Fair.' Thackeray asked a friend of mine and of his to find out who the writer was; and the friend had no difficulty in accomplishing this task. For myself, I was almost in a humour to think I had lived long enough, since I had lived to write anything which was worthy of Thackeray's favourable notice. I may say here in passing that during my experience in literature I have over and over again been struck with the readiness of really great authors to take account of young beginners who seem to have any promise in them, and to lend them a kindly helping hand. One day I received through the friend I have just mentioned an invitation from Thackeray to dine at his house in an informal kind of way, and meet two or three other literary men. Need I say that I accepted the invitation with pride and delight? No favour that any sovereign could bestow upon me, had any sovereign been in the least likely to single me out for any mark of favour, could have filled me with such rapture as I received from that token of Thackeray's goodwill. I am afraid that for some days after I made myself rather a nuisance to my friends and acquaintances by my announcement, apparently in quite a casual sort of way, that I had been invited to dine at Thackeray's house. I am afraid I sometimes added with an affectation of composure, as if I were speaking of quite an ordinary event in one's life,

that it was to be a small dinner-party confined to a few literary men, and that I expected to hear some pleasant talk about literature. The time was drawing close to the Christmas of 1863. I used to go down to the newspaper office in the City every afternoon, and one afternoon, not easily to be forgotten by me in this world, I learned in the City the terrible news of Thackeray's sudden death. That was a darksome Christmas time for me. Thackeray was, as he is still, one of my great literary heroes; and now, just at the moment when the possibility seemed to open on me of being admitted to his friendship, the chance was gone for ever. I should have mourned even if I had never met him face to face; but to have met him, to have been invited to his house, and then to find all possibility of his friendship suddenly cut off from me, was enough to make me think for the time more of my own personal loss than of the loss which the world of letters had sustained.

Of course, I heard all Thackeray's lectures; and to hear them was a delightful experience for me. I remember that I was rather nervous about going to hear his first lecture on the Georges, because of my fear lest my author should be undertaking a task outside his proper range and should disappoint me; for I could not bear the idea of Thackeray's attempting to do anything and not distinctly succeeding in the attempt. All my fears vanished when I did hear that first lecture. Thackeray was not a magnificent declaimer like Dickens; he made no attempt at dramatic effect of any kind; his voice, though clear and penetrating and sometimes thrilling, had nothing like the variety and richness of intonation which the voice of Dickens could always command; he was simply an educated gentleman reading aloud to an educated assembly. But he

had to the full the unstudied art of expression in all that he read; and after a long and vast variety of experiences in the hearing of all manner of public men addressing audiences from platforms, from pulpits, from judicial benches, and from the benches of the Houses of Parliament, I can remember no instance of an audience kept more thoroughly in hushed and anxious delight — delight blended with terror lest a single word should be lost — than was the audience that listened to the closing passage of Thackeray's lecture on George III. I heard that lecture again and again, and each time towards the close there came that enraptured stillness over the audience which made me understand what people meant when they said 'you might have heard a pin drop.' I was impressed in much the same way by Thackeray's reading of Hood's 'Bridge of Sighs' in one of his other lectures, and by his reading of that charming poem of Bishop Heber's which begins with the line 'If thou, my love, wert by my side.'

I remember that towards the close of Thackeray's life we used to have great discussions as to whether Thackeray was or was not a great admirer of rank — whether he was not, in fact, as some ill-natured critics declared him to be, a personage who ought to have had a place in the collection of characters represented by his own 'Book of Snobs.' So far as I knew or could observe Thackeray, I had no reason to believe that he had any defect of the kind. I had known him to be on the most kindly and friendly terms with men and women who had nothing whatever of rank or station to recommend them to his notice. One anecdote, however, which was told to me as a proof of Thackeray's alleged weakness for aristocratic rank, I feel bound to narrate — it is so whimsical an illustra-

tion of an utterly perverse reading of character by an oddly prejudiced observer. Among my casual acquaintances at the time was a man who was, like myself, struggling to get into literature. He was a man who claimed to belong to a good family, and who was always boasting of the fact and telling you of his high connections, bringing out the names of his first cousin the marquis, and his second cousin the duchess, and his aunt in the country whose father had been in the Royal Household. We all understood the weakness of our poor friend, and made fun of him when his back was turned. He had been lucky enough to make the acquaintance of Thackeray, and was fond of alluding to the fact. One day I met him at the Garrick Club, and he suddenly began to talk to me about Thackeray. 'Now look here,' he said, 'you always refuse to believe that Thackeray worships the aristocracy. I'll give you a convincing proof that he does, a proof that I got only this very day. Do you see this cigar?' He held one out between his fingers, and I admitted that I did see it. 'Well,' he said, 'that cigar was given me by Thackeray; and do you know what he said when he was giving it to me?' I had to admit that I could not form any guess as to what Thackeray might have said. So he went on with an air of triumph. 'Well,' he said, 'Thackeray's words to me were these: "Now, my dear fellow, here is a cigar which I know you will be delighted to have, because it is one of a box that was given to me by a marquis." Now what have you to say?' I had nothing to say. I could have said 'I really did n't know that Thackeray was as well acquainted with you as all that,' but I controlled my tongue, and the conversation dropped. Thackeray, too, had evidently seen the weakness of our poor friend,

and was making merciless fun of it. My friend told the same story, and with the same purpose, to several other men whom I knew, and never seemed to have the remotest suspicion that the great satirist saw his foible and saw, too, that he was too dull of understanding to know when he was made the mark for satire.

I have one relic of Thackeray. After his death there was a sale of some of his furniture and his books at the house which he had built to please his own taste on Kensington Palace Green, near to the old palace in Kensington, one of the very first, I think, of the houses imitated from the style of Queen Anne which were called into existence in London. There I bought his copy of Smollett, with some of his own pencilled notes on the margin of a page here and there. I need hardly say that I preserve it as a possession beyond price.

About that time some of us talked Dickens and some of us thought Thackeray, and some of us, who considered ourselves above a mere absorption in novels, talked and tried to think Carlyle. The process of talking Carlyle came easier to his votaries than mere outsiders could now imagine. The process of thinking Carlyle we most of us assumed to be getting up a determination in our own minds that all 'shams' and 'simulacra' should be abolished for ever — 'squelched' was the favourite word — and that 'the forlorn hope of God's battle' was to be cleared of them. The votaries applied this to every possible institution or person whom they did not favour; and there was a Carlylese system of thinking made easy and ready to hand. The Carlylese vernacular was usually acquired by the simple process of inverting some of the words of a sentence that might otherwise have been commonplace.

In our debating societies, if we desired to say that some public man whom we admired had a certain cause at heart, we declared that it was 'in the heart of him,' or, better still, that it was 'in the big heart of him;' and we were full of the belief that the mere utterance made us genuine Carlyles all at once. The young literary men who wrote in periodicals or in newspapers either thought after Thackeray or talked after Dickens. Columns of description were written then which were simply adulterated Dickens; there were ever so many young men and young women to whom Dickens meant all literature. On the other hand, those of us who pretended to have any ideas at all about society thought of it just as Thackeray had taught us to do. I do not believe that any authors of the present day have anything like the same influence over popular thought and popular speech that Dickens, Thackeray, and Carlyle had during my early years in London. Some allowance must be made for the writers who were beginning their career at that time. The atmosphere was impregnated with Dickens here, with Carlyle there, with Thackeray yonder. We could not escape from imitation, no matter how hard we might have tried to be original, and, indeed, I suppose nobody ever became original while striving at originality. We lived on imitation; it was the very breath of our nostrils. A man who inhales smoke must breathe out smoke; and a man who inhales Dickens, Thackeray, or Carlyle, was sure to give out a weak or smoky imitation of Dickens, Thackeray, or Carlyle. I am sure the writers who are beginning in the present time have a much better chance of doing good and genuine work than we had in those departed days. Better, no doubt, for the age in general to have the great writers; but not better, I

think, for the young beginners. Even for the age in general it is something of a compensation to know that if it has not a Dickens, a Thackeray, or a Carlyle, so neither has it an infinite number of more or less pretentious and feeble imitations of these three great writers.

Tennyson, no matter how large the number of his devoted admirers, never influenced the ordinary spoken style of his age to anything like the extent that these other great writers did. For one reason, there was not mannerism enough about Tennyson to enable any one of us to produce a colorable imitation of him. Of course, he could be burlesqued — that was easy enough; any of us could do that; but however great and sincere might be our admiration for his poetry, the most genuine admiration did not help us much to turn out lines which even our own self-conceit could enable us to think at all like his measure and his melody. Macaulay of course impressed the writing public a great deal; and it was hard at the time for a devoted admirer of Macaulay's to write a political or historical essay without getting into the trick of antithesis, without straining a contention to the whole extreme in one direction, and then utterly demolishing it by straining it to the very extreme in the opposite direction. But then Macaulay only influenced the style of the young men who tried to write essays, and did not affect the spoken or written style of the ordinary public — even of the literary public — at all. My personal acquaintance with Tennyson was but slight; I met him, indeed, several times; and can easily understand the kind of personal worship which those felt for him who knew him better than I did. But somehow he always seemed to me like a man involved in a cloud — like a man, at all events, who belonged to a cloudland kind of world

quite different from the chattering, bustling, rapid life of Society and Parliament and public meeting with which I was better acquainted. Robert Browning, on the other hand, I came in later years to know very well. I had always been a devoted admirer of his genius; his iron harp-string sounded a chord that spoke to my mind and heart as no other poet of the day could have done. If, before seeing either man, I were to have evolved from my moral consciousness an idea of Tennyson and of Browning, I think I should have evolved Browning for Tennyson and Tennyson for Browning. I should have pictured Browning as the man withdrawn into the cloud, and Tennyson as the brightening figure which came into every household and appealed to every sensibility. My first acquaintance with Browning was made in a modest sort of way. I had published in the 'Morning Star' a versified political squib which somehow or other was fortunate enough to catch the attention of Browning and to amuse him. The lines were written to suit a passing political purpose; and they passed away with the purpose and the moment; but they amused Robert Browning at the time, and happening one evening to meet John Bright, and assuming that John Bright was likely to know something about the authorship of any original matter appearing in the 'Morning Star,' he asked Bright a question on the subject. Bright had no difficulty at guessing at the author, and he told Browning my name, and brought from Browning to me a kindly friendly message of encouragement. That led to an acquaintanceship which gave me an opportunity of meeting Browning frequently from time to time until his death. No man, I think, could be a more delightful acquaintance than Browning; no man, I am sure, could be a more sincere

and steady friend to his friend. I have been reading lately some memoirs published by a distinguished English authoress in which there is a description given of Browning, illustrating, as it seems to me, a most curious misappreciation of the man's nature and his conversation. The writer expresses her utter astonishment that such a man could be the hero of the 'Sonnets from the Portuguese;' and describes him as a mere chatterer in society, and a devotee of rank and fashion. One can only wonder how two people living at the same time and meeting with the same sort of people and following in general the same sort of craft can possibly have formed such totally different impressions of one and the same man as were formed of Robert Browning by the authoress I speak of and myself. First of all, as to Browning's manner of talk. Was it only the idle chatter of society? I have met a great many brilliant talkers in different countries in my time; I do not know that I have ever met a talker more brilliant or who could, when he pleased, go more deeply into the heart of a subject than Robert Browning. I shall never forget an account which he gave me once of his early recollections of Edmund Kean's acting. Browning, of course, was very young when he saw Edmund Kean, but he had carried away in his mind a perfect picture of the great tragedian's style and manner; and I must say that with all I had read of Kean, nothing ever impressed me with such a comprehension of his genius and of his style as did that rapid description by Browning, given, not to the company in general, but to me at a London dinner table. There was not in his description the slightest straining after effect, not the faintest suggestion of the clever talker talking to show his cleverness; it was simply the outpouring of a man filled

with his subject and anxious to make his listener feel as he felt; and the subject itself was started by the merest chance and without any premeditation whatever on either side. I did not even know when I mentioned the name of Kean that Browning had ever seen the great actor; indeed I can only say, without the slightest exaggeration, that I never knew Browning to touch any subject in conversation which he did not adorn. His talk all ran along and sparkled pleasantly like a bright stream on a cheery autumnal day. It was not talk for the sake of talking; it was not social speech-making; it was entirely spontaneous — entirely natural, not a carefully balanced sentence or poised period in it. It was chatter, if you like to call it so; and if the thoughts of genius broken into sparkling conversational talk can properly be called chatter, then let chatter thrive, and the more we have of it the more happy and the better cultured shall we be.

I remember hearing a curious sort of tribute paid to the genius of Robert Browning and of his wife. It was at a London dinner party some ten or twelve years ago; and I remember that among those who sat round the table were Mr. Leonard Courtney, Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, and Lord Russell of Killowen, then Sir Charles Russell. Among the guests, too, was a distinguished member of the House of Commons, since dead, a man of great ability and political position, but not gifted with any special taste for literature or art, or perhaps I should put it more correctly by saying, not given by habit to the study of literature or art. The talk turned upon modern poetry; and our friend, whom I have not named, suddenly told us that there were only two modern poets whom he really cared for, and that these were a husband and wife, both Americans. We all eagerly

asked for the names of these his favourite minstrels, and he astonished the company by telling us that he was speaking of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Browning, who he declared were to his mind superior to any living English poets. We were all a little staggered for a while, and nobody quite knew what to say. At length, some one summoned up courage enough to insinuate that Mr. and Mrs. Browning were not American poets, but English. Our friend shook his head blandly and maintained his position. He said that many years before he had seen the poems of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Browning on the drawing-room table of every one whom he visited in the United States; and that he had always found the works of the same authors lying on the tables of all the Americans he had known formerly in Paris, or Dresden, or Florence, or Rome. Lately, he added, he had been out of the way of reading poetry, but he could never forget the impression these two American poets had made upon his mind. Then we all began to understand. Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning had undoubtedly found a much earlier welcome among the American reading public than among the public here in their own country; and our friend's early assumption that they must be American poets became somewhat more intelligible and excusable than it had seemed to be at first. I told the story afterwards to Robert Browning, and he was greatly amused by it, and indeed took it as a distinct compliment. He acknowledged the fact that his own writings especially had found appreciation in America much more quickly than here at home; and he declared that our friend's opinion was, in its way, a genuine offering of praise. I am well aware that Herbert Spencer had at one time a far greater circle of admirers in the United States than in England; and I know that I

myself became quite a person of interest in more than one American household when it turned out in the course of conversation that I had actually seen and spoken with Herbert Spencer, and was in the way of meeting him as an acquaintance now and then in London.

There are two anecdotes of Thomas Carlyle which I wish to mention, partly because they help to explain the kind of alarm which I have said already I always felt when I happened to be in Carlyle's presence. There was a very dear American friend of mine, Dr. George Ripley, a scholar and a literary man, whose name I am sure is still remembered by many English readers. Ripley was one of those who, with Margaret Fuller and Nathaniel Hawthorne, helped to form the little colony of Brook Farm, which Hawthorne has made immortal in his 'Blithedale Romance.' Dr. Ripley was one of the most genial and polished gentlemen I have ever met. After the close of the American Civil War he came over on a visit to this country, and, furnished with a cordial letter of introduction from Emerson, he called on Thomas Carlyle at his house in Chelsea. Carlyle received him with a sort of grim civility; but the civility soon began to give way as Carlyle set himself to unburden his mind with regard to the conduct of the Federal Government in America. Growing warm with the glow of his own eloquent denunciation, he poured forth on my poor friend Ripley a very lava torrent of censure and reproach. He told Ripley that the Northern Government were hurrying their people down into Tophet — down into a very Inferno of national calamity and shame. Ripley, the quietest and most modest of men, could only sit silent while the anger of the Chelsea philosopher was spending itself on its unre-

sisting subject. He made no attempt to defend the Government of his country, but quietly, when a pause came, gathered himself up, and without a word of remonstrance left the Chelsea home, not again to cross its threshold. The other anecdote concerns another friend of mine, the late William Allingham, poet and essayist. Most of my readers will well remember Allingham's poetry; some of them must have known the man himself, and, knowing him, must have loved him. He was one of the very gentlest men with whom I ever became acquainted. He was a devoted friend of Carlyle and of Tennyson. Absolute devotion towards them rather than mere admiration was the feeling which lived in his heart, and both the men recognised his worth and fully appreciated him, and gave him their thorough friendship. He was a constant visitor at Carlyle's house; and that must have been an adventurous or audacious man indeed who dared to say a word in disparagement of William Allingham in the presence of Thomas Carlyle. Now, Allingham had opinions of his own, and was a man who could have shown plenty of courage and spirit if occasion required; but the gentleness of his nature rendered dispute of any kind distasteful to him; and the one thing that never would have occurred to any of his friends as possible, was the chance of his taking on himself to dispute with Carlyle. However, it so happened that one evening at Carlyle's house there was a little company gathered together, and the talk turned upon an eminent English statesman not now living, whose political action just then was the subject of general controversy. Carlyle denounced this statesman with even more than his usual energy, and launched forth into a denunciation which allowed of no interruption until it had spent its force.

Then William Allingham began the mildest expostulation, merely prefacing his intended remarks by the suggestion that after all there might perhaps be something to be said on the other side — some reason to be given why the sentence of the court should not be passed against the arraigned statesman. Carlyle cut him short. 'Eh! William Allingham,' he broke forth, 'you 're just about the most disputatious man I ever met. Eh! man, when you 're in one of your humours you 'd just dispute about anything.' Most of the guests were bewildered; none of them had ever heard Allingham dispute about anything, and the idea of his venturing wantonly to argue with Carlyle had never entered into the mind of the most daringly imaginative in that company. Allingham took the remark in very good part, and used to tell the story himself for the amusement and delight of some of his friends. He regarded it as only Carlyle's way, and was none the less devoted to his hero sage and guide. Anyone, however, can easily understand how it was that I, an utterly obscure and insignificant personage, should have prudently refrained from expressing any hasty opinion in the presence of Carlyle. Of course, all who knew him well, knew that he was not to be taken literally, and that the value of his friendship was in no manner to be estimated by the occasional weaknesses of a temper too hot and a spirit of self-assertion too dominant. I have known some of Carlyle's closest friends, and have always found that the closer was men's knowledge of him the warmer was their affection for him. I never came to know him really in that inner sense; and any chances I might have had of getting into a closer acquaintance with him, I shrank from improving for the reason I have mentioned, that I had not the courage to run the risk

of being snubbed. I consoled myself by thinking that I could admire 'Sartor Resartus' and the 'French Revolution' as thoroughly as if I had been meeting Carlyle three nights in every week; and that the man whose writings had taught me to understand Goethe must be a guide to me, no matter how our opinions might have differed on the question of Manhood Suffrage.

CHAPTER IV

RICHARD COBDEN

It was through my connection with the 'Morning Star' that I first made the acquaintance and obtained, I hope I may say, the friendship of Richard Cobden and John Bright. I was in the habit of meeting Cobden every now and then until his death; and my intercourse with Mr. Bright was very close until the autumn of 1868, when I made my first visit to the United States, and was renewed after my return, and maintained for many years. Of Cobden as a parliamentary orator I can only say that the House of Commons has not within my time had any speaker of quite the same order. It is not impossible that we may hear of another Gladstone or another Bright before we hear of another Cobden. Not that Cobden was so great an orator by any means as Gladstone or Bright. It may be doubted really whether he ought to be called a great orator at all. Passion must enter largely into oratory, and Cobden's serene and simple style of speaking borrowed hardly any aid from the influence or the effect of passion. His speeches were all argument addressed to the understanding, but addressed also to the feelings. His style was essentially conversational; but he had a quiet strength of voice which enabled him to make his arguments heard not merely all through the House of Commons, but in every corner of the great Free Trade Hall

in Manchester. One who had only heard Cobden in the House of Commons, and had delighted in the easy way by which without any apparent effort, and in the manner of one talking rather than of one delivering a speech, every argument was pressed home to the intelligence of the listeners, might well have been excused if he thought that such a speaker must necessarily have been ineffective on a great public platform. Such a critic, however, would only have to listen to one of Cobden's great speeches delivered to an immense gathering at Rochdale or in the Manchester Free Trade Hall in order to admire the perfect ease with which the same volume of voice was enabled to do justice to the same method of appeal employed under such totally different conditions. Sophistry, prejudice, class instincts seemed to crumble away as Cobden assailed them with the breathing of his quiet but merciless argument. Cobden was a man of extensive reading, of keen and shrewd observation, and of a broad and varied experience. For a man of those comparatively far-off days he had travelled much, and he observed as he travelled everything that passed under his eyes. He had been all over Europe; he had visited the nearer East; and — a much rarer experience at that time — he was well acquainted with the United States of America. He was one of the very first Englishmen who foresaw, from his own observation, the utter hopelessness of all attempts to prop up the tottering system of Ottoman Government in Europe. He was fond of pointing out that Turkey was perishing in any case from the want of capable Turks. 'I shall begin to have hopes for Turkey,' he used to say, 'when I find Turkish ships built in Turkish dockyards, manned by Turkish seamen, navigated by Turkish officers and laden with Turkish cargoes, sailing out from

Turkish ports.' When the Civil War in the United States broke out, and nine out of every ten men in what was called London Society, and in the House of Commons itself, were firmly convinced that the Southern Confederation was certain to hold its own and establish its independence, if indeed it did not occupy Washington and set up its own President there, Mr. Cobden quietly smiled at the ignorance of those who took such dreamings for realities, and gave his own reasons, drawn from his own personal knowledge, for holding the opinions which time afterwards proved to be right. 'It is the thought of ninety-nine men out of every hundred, my Lord,' says Varney to Leicester in Scott's 'Kenilworth.' 'And the hundredth man, who knows better,' Leicester quietly replies, 'what does he think?' Cobden was in that case the man who knew better than the crowd of men who had jumped at a different conclusion.

Cobden passed with many men, and indeed with the public in general, for being a much less extreme Radical and Democrat than Bright. Bright had all the passion of the orator, and he fought his political battles with something of the spirit of the gladiator; his was a nature made and moulded for antagonism above all things. The natural sweetness of Cobden's disposition inclined him rather to quiet argument leading to persuasion and conviction; he felt little or nothing of that joy of the strife which was one of Bright's inspiring characteristics. Cobden always seemed to argue with his opponents as if he were dealing with men of sound sense and unselfish aim, who only needed to have it shown to them that they were mistaken in order to bring them gradually round to a right view of things. His quiet persuasive earnestness had something winning and captivating in it. There-

fore the natural inclination of men was to regard him as more moderate in his views and more ready to accept a compromise than his combative friend and political associate. But in truth Cobden was far more of a Democrat than Bright. I have heard him often compare their political views in his usual tone of sweet good temper. He used to declare that he was himself a convinced Democrat: that is, a believer in the right of the majority to have the final settlement of all political questions. Bright, he used to say, was not in that sense a Democrat at all; Bright was convinced of the necessity of certain great constitutional and political changes: on these he had set his heart, and to the accomplishment of these he devoted his intellect and his eloquence. Let these once be carried, and Bright, he continued, would be quite content if the democratic principle were pushed no further in his time. Cobden believed in Democracy as Democracy; Bright regarded the extension of the suffrage only as the means of carrying out certain specific and constitutional reforms. Of course Cobden never talked in this way with the faintest thought of disparaging Bright, for whom he had, it is needless to say, the warmest affection and the deepest devotedness. It was only his good-humoured way of trying to persuade people that Bright was not by any means the sort of iconoclast in politics that most of his opponents supposed him to be; and of showing that in point of fact Bright could be more easily satisfied than he (Cobden) could profess to be.

The event showed that Cobden was completely right in his estimate of his great friend's purposes. There was a certain amount of something which must be called 'conservative' feeling in Bright which was afterwards shown more than once when he positively refused to

follow his great leader, Mr. Gladstone, all the way upon the path of domestic reform which Gladstone endeavoured to tread. There was hardly any bitterness of feeling, personal or political, in Cobden. Even towards Lord Palmerston he felt no manner of ill-will, although nobody could have been more often opposed than he was to most of Palmerston's opinions and actions in foreign policy, and to his lack of opinions and his habitual inaction in domestic politics. I was much struck once by some words which Cobden used in discussing the character of a great Conservative politician to whom Cobden and Bright were alike strongly opposed. We were talking of the wonderful success this statesman had made in political life, and of the manner in which he must have satisfied his uttermost ambition, and the gratification which all that success must have brought to him. Cobden paused for a while, and then said, 'Yes, that is all very well, but how will he feel when he knows that the career is drawing to an end, and when with him there is nothing left but retrospect?' For myself I was less interested in Cobden's views as to the statesman of whom we were speaking, than in the light which the words threw on the noble simplicity of his own nature. 'When there is nothing left but retrospect?' It did not seem to occur to Cobden that such a man as he of whom we were talking could find plenty of reasons to satisfy himself, even at the close of his career, that every step he had taken had been taken in pure patriotic unselfishness, and not guided in the least by any desire to grasp at so many successive opportunities of personal and political advancement.

I may quote here a characteristic letter of Cobden's which I received from him one day, and have kept ever

since. One morning the 'Times' came out with a long and solemn article announcing to the world that Prussia had at last consented to join the Zollverein, the Customs League into which many of the German States had entered among themselves. Now, the Zollverein had been created by Prussia herself — created more than a generation before; and it was therefore somewhat astounding to be told in a solemn leading article, and as a piece of momentous news, that Prussia had at last consented to take part in the League. Everyone saw that there must be some amazing mistake; but we most of us at that time still regarded the 'Times' as a sort of inspired authority, however we might feel obliged to refuse the conclusion which that journal sometimes drew from facts that had come to its knowledge. I was inclined to suppose, therefore, that something or other must have happened of which I knew nothing to give a certain semblance of plausibility to the announcement in the 'Times,' and as no one could be better acquainted with such subjects than Mr. Cobden, I wrote him a letter asking him if he could suggest any explanation of this astonishing mistake. He sent me an answer on the letter paper of the House of Commons. This is his letter:

'My dear Sir, — It is the most extraordinary blunder running through the whole article. I had written to you before your note came. When I first came to the word Prussia I thought it must have been a mistake for Austria, but the word is repeated. It shows what a habit there must be in these flashy "Times" articles to select men to write who have a flashy style and no knowledge of modern history.

'Yours, R. C.'

The 'Times' next day came out with an article setting forth that it was but a mistake of Prussia for Austria, as Cobden had suggested. The correction, however, only plunged the 'Times' into fresh mistakes, which no substitution of the word Austria for the word Prussia could possibly explain away. A Vienna paper dryly disposed of the explanatory article by the words quoted from Shakespeare's Cassio, 'Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.' An extract from another letter written by Cobden at the time when Europe was threatened with a continental convulsion on account of the Schleswig-Holstein question is full of interest even now, and shows how clearly Cobden understood the elements and the probabilities of the controversy. 'I am quite sure that the House and the country are not for war to decide whether a slice of territory about half the size of the Isle of Wight is to belong to Denmark or Germany. Austria must be averse to war. All depends on whether Bismarck may find it to his interest to mount the German Lion and meet us halfway; and if so, and we go any further, we may be forced into a war to suit the purposes of the fanatical Nationals of Germany, who believe their only way to a united German nation is by being smelted in a great war. I trust we shall give no such opportunity. I repeat — the majority of the House are for peace. Believe me, yours truly, R. COBDEN.'

Everybody who remembers anything of Cobden's public career will remember that when the Tories went out of office, and Lord Palmerston came into power at the head of a Liberal Government, Palmerston offered Cobden a place in the Administration as President of the Board of Trade. At the time of the change Cobden was returning from America, and a deputation of his

friends went to meet him at Liverpool to tell him of the offer which must have been news to him, and to get his opinions upon it. Cobden very naturally declined to be drawn upon the subject or to give any intimation as to the course he meant to adopt, until he should have personally received the offer and should have had time to take counsel with his friends. No doubt, as he afterwards explained in a public address, he would not under any circumstances have accepted office under Lord Palmerston. But he saw no reason why his friend and colleague in political affairs, Mr. Milner Gibson, to whom office had also been tendered by Lord Palmerston, should not accept the offer. Mr. Milner Gibson had never made himself so conspicuous in his opposition to Palmerston as Cobden had done, and Milner Gibson therefore, with the full approval of his friend, accepted the position. I heard that when Cobden visited Lord Palmerston to explain his reasons for not taking office he said good-humouredly, amongst other things, that he had again and again described Palmerston in public as the worst Foreign Minister England had ever had. 'But,' said Palmerston, 'Milner Gibson has often said just the same of me.' 'Yes,' replied Cobden, blandly, 'but then I meant it.'

I met Michel Chevalier in Cobden's company several times while Cobden was arranging in London the details of the famous French treaty with Louis Napoleon, then Emperor of the French. The name of Michel Chevalier is, I am afraid, little remembered in this country or even in France at the present time; he was, however, a man of very remarkable ability who had had a strange career. He began active life as a Socialist of an extreme order who made of Socialism a sort of religion and blended it with theories against marriage as well as against private

property. He was for a long time a devoted follower of Père Enfantin, who had started the peculiar school of religion of Socialism of which Chevalier became an ardent disciple. Chevalier had suffered imprisonment for some of his socialistic utterances and his attacks upon the established order of things, and more especially the established leaders of things in France. He gradually grew out of all his former opinions and became a most enlightened political economist and almost as devoted an advocate of peace as Cobden himself. Cobden always spoke most highly of the assistance which he had received from Chevalier in his long efforts to bring the Emperor Napoleon to sound economic views on the interchange of goods between nation and nation, or, perhaps more strictly speaking, to prevail upon the Emperor to see that the best guarantee for peace between England and France would be found in some sort of common agreement for the more satisfactory interchange of the commodities produced by both countries. I remember very well Cobden's telling me more than once that he had received great assistance also from the Emperor's cousin Prince Napoleon, known in France after the Crimean war by the derisive nickname of Prince 'Plon-plon.' Cobden spoke to me in the highest terms of Prince Napoleon's intellect, ability, and general information; he told me that he was astonished to find what a sound political economist Prince Napoleon was; and he added emphatically, that taken all round he regarded Prince Napoleon as the best-informed man he had ever met. I was greatly impressed by this expression of opinion at the time; for just then I had not unnaturally fallen into the common opinion that Prince Napoleon was nothing better than a worthless voluptuary with a highly cultivated taste for art. I think Cobden was the first man

of eminence and reliability from whom I ever heard a word favourable to the Emperor's cousin. Later on I had some opportunity of forming an opinion for myself, and I have always since held to the opinion that Prince Napoleon had an intellect and a stock of knowledge on almost all subjects which, but for unfortunate defects of character, might have made him one of the great men of his time.

Cobden had but a poor opinion of the Emperor Napoleon's intellect, but believed him to be a man of personal integrity and of honest purpose towards England and towards the world in general, apart, of course, from the exigencies of his own ambition and his own most perilous place at the head of affairs in France. John Morley in his 'Life of Cobden,' as masterly a piece of biographical narrative as any I know, publishes a passage from Cobden's journal in which he speaks of his first visit to the Emperor during the negotiations for the treaty at the palace of Saint-Cloud. 'The approach to the palace of Saint-Cloud,' Cobden says, 'was thronged with military, both horse and foot. I entered the building and passed through an avenue of liveried lackeys in the hall, from which I ascended the grand staircase guarded at the top by sentries; and I passed through a series of apartments hung with gorgeous tapestry, each room being in charge of servants higher in rank as they come nearer to the person of the sovereign. As I surveyed this gorgeous spectacle I found my thoughts busy with the recollection of a very different scene which I had looked upon a few months before at Washington when I was the guest of the President of the United States, a plain man in a black suit, living in comparative simplicity, without a sentry at his door or a liveried servant in his house.' If Cobden had lived a

little longer than he did he might have had his own reflections on the event which took place when the President of the United States, without a sentry at his door or a liveried servant in his house, made it known to the Emperor Louis Napoleon that the French troops must be withdrawn from Mexico lest worse should come of it; and the Emperor had to obey the order and withdraw his troops accordingly as at a word of command.

I must say in passing that the first idea of the treaty of commerce with France came not from Mr. Cobden but from Mr. Bright. Mr. Bright, speaking in the House of Commons during the session of 1859, asked why the Government did not go to the French Emperor and attempt to persuade him to allow his people to trade freely with ours. Michel Chevalier, who had read the speech, was taken with the idea and wrote to his friend Cobden about it. But, as Mr. Morley truly says, 'the idea was in the air,' and had been talked of by Count Persigny, then French ambassador in London, and by others as well. There was a common impression at the time that Cobden was one of the originators of the 'Morning Star' newspaper, and that in fact he was one of its proprietors. This common belief, however, had no foundation in fact; Cobden never had a share in the 'Morning Star,' although, of course, he strongly supported its principles and gave it from time to time some valuable assistance by his suggestions and his advice. I may mention as a matter of fact which has a certain melancholy interest attaching to it — a fact which I am inclined to think has never been mentioned in print before — that the last letter Cobden ever wrote to a newspaper was written to the 'Morning Star' and had nothing to do with international treaties or free trade or political economy, or

any question of peace and war. The letter came to be written in this way. A poor young English dressmaker had married an American seaman, and they had two little children — a boy and a girl. In one of his voyages the husband met with an accident, from the effects of which he never recovered. He was able to reach London; and there his wife worked patiently and laboriously for him in the full hope that he might yet recover and resume his place in life. I had come to know the couple — their home was near me in one of the London suburbs; and I knew that they were devoted to each other. The poor husband died before long, and the young widow was left not only without money, but actually in debt for some of the necessaries of life. I made an appeal to the public on behalf of the widow, and was able to raise some money which helped her out of her immediate distress and enabled her to maintain her little children. One of the letters which I received in reply to this appeal contained a subscription to the little fund and was merely signed R. C. I knew the writing well — it was that of Richard Cobden. I knew that Cobden was unwilling to have his name published when he did such acts of kindness; and I therefore did not even address him on the subject, but simply published his brief letter of recommendation with the signed initials. That was the last dealing of any kind I had with Richard Cobden; and I think the action was characteristic of the man. We have now no influence in this country making for the cause of peace which can be exactly likened to that exercised for so many years by Cobden and Bright. Perhaps we may hope that there is less need at present for such an influence. On neither side of the political field have we had of late years any Prime Minister ready to enter with so light a

spirit into war as some Prime Ministers on either side were found willing to do, or could easily be prevailed upon to do, in that disappearing time. Nor would it be just to regard Cobden as an advocate of peace at any price. No man detested war more than he did; no one distrusted a war policy as a means of benefiting humanity more than he did; but he knew that there were principles which must not be yielded even at the risk of war, and he always admitted that some of the purest patriots the world has ever known found themselves driven at the last to draw the sword. I have never known a man more willing to make full allowance for the conditions in which other men were placed than was Richard Cobden. But with the wanton war-spirit he had no manner of sympathy; and for a reckless War Minister of whatever State he had no manner of respect.

CHAPTER V

JOHN BRIGHT

I HAD a curious argument once with Mr. Bright on the subject of novels and novel writing. I had written a novel which was published anonymously and was well received by the reviewers and the public. It came in Mr. Bright's way somehow, and he read it and liked it; and I told him it was mine; and out of this arose the argument. He said to me in his kindly way, 'Now you have made a good beginning, and I should like to give you a piece of advice: Make up your mind to write novels all about good people.' I was somewhat staggered at first by this peculiar counsel, and I endeavoured to draw him out a little further on the subject. He told me that he liked the novel I had written, mainly because it was almost all about good people. There was only one bad person in it, and he insisted that it would have been better still if that one bad personage had been left out. I asked him mildly if he thought the publishers would be likely to care much for a novel all about good people; and he answered me by saying that he felt sure the publishers would come to like anything which was liked by the public. Therein I had to admit that he was probably right; but I asked him whether he thought the public would take much interest in romances which were all about good people. Bright contended that the public would be very glad in the end

to be educated up to such a point of artistic morality. Then he went on to argue that there was quite enough of trouble and distress in life, shadowing and darkening the paths of the most virtuous persons, to give absorbing interest to a story although it did not contain the picture of one single villain from first to last. I appealed to the illustrious examples of men like Walter Scott and Dickens and Thackeray; but he held firm to his purpose that the novels of all these writers would have been so much the better if the villains, male and female, had been left clean out of them. I spoke of the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' and asked him how that story could have been worked out without the introduction of a dash of villainy into it; but he was not dismayed, and insisted that Goldsmith would have made his romance much better and wholesomer reading if young Squire Thornhill had behaved better and if there had been no trick about a supposed sham marriage. He went on to say that one reason why he never could enjoy Thackeray's novels thoroughly was that there were too many people in them like Becky Sharp and the Marquis of Steyne. I gently suggested that the novelist was supposed to give some sort of picture of real life; and that as there were undoubtedly bad persons in real life, there seemed to be some sort of excuse for the introduction of bad persons into a novel. The answer was quick and quiet: 'The very fact that there are bad persons in real life and that we are sometimes compelled to meet them is the strongest reason why we should not be compelled to meet them in the pages of fiction, to which we turn for relief and refreshment after our dreary experience of unwelcome realities.' I was willing to concede a great deal to the principle that a novel ought to teach a healthy moral — in fact, I think I was willing to go a

little farther in that way than my literary and artistic studies of themselves could have inclined me. But Bright insisted that that was not enough or nearly enough; and that after a novelist had tainted our minds by pictures of objectionable personages, it did not by any means satisfy all moral ends that he should bring his virtuous personages to happiness and his villains to condign punishment. I brought up the subject of one of the most popular novels of the day, a novel excellent of its kind, but which persons of unexalted mind might possibly have described as belonging to the 'goody-goody' order of fiction — a novel which I knew was intensely admired by many of Bright's friends, and which I presumed had won his own admiration; and I asked him whether he was prepared to find fault with the authoress of that story merely because she had introduced into it a lady whose conduct was not absolutely blameless. I had hoped that this illustration might have some effect on him: but I found that I was mistaken. He admitted his admiration for the story, and said that it was much healthier on the whole than most other novels of the day; but he maintained that it would have been healthier and better still if the authoress had left her one offender entirely out of the tale. Then I passed on to speak of great poems, and of course I mentioned Shakespeare and dwelt upon the fact that in his plays there are many personages who, like Iago and Iachimo for instance, must undoubtedly be considered very disreputable persons. Even the great authority of Shakespeare did not compel Mr. Bright to abandon his theory. He frankly admitted that it was a decided drawback to his enjoyment of Shakespeare to be compelled to make even the passing acquaintance of wicked persons like Iago and Iachimo.

Then it occurred to me that I had got him at last; and I turned to his own especial favourite, Milton, and I asked him how he was prepared to champion 'Paradise Lost,' seeing that nobody on earth could possibly be perverse enough to classify Satan and Beelzebub among good persons. But he was ready for me there, too. He argued that the demoralising effect of introducing bad men and women into novels, or into poems, was because weak-minded readers might be led into admiration for them, and might be filled with a desire to imitate them; whereas it was absolutely out of the power of any mortal man or woman to imitate Satan or Beelzebub. He added, also, that Milton's 'Paradise Lost' was a very different sort of work from most of our modern novels — an expression of opinion in which I felt bound to agree. I confess, however, that I thought there was something highly ingenious and well deserving the consideration of the artistic mind in the principle which he had been laying down and the distinction which he drew between Satan and Becky Sharp. One can imagine a young woman of an ambitious turn of mind and a weak conscience being led away into a desire to imitate Becky Sharp; but the ambition to imitate Satan seems to be beyond the level of the most conceited among us. Macaulay says that an Italian audience in the Elizabethan age would have regarded Iago and not Othello as the hero of the tragedy; and would have admired Iago's clever cajolery and set down Othello as just the sort of person who ought to be made the dupe of the superior intelligence. But even the most censorious critic of Machiavelli would have hardly accredited him with any serious desire to emulate the doings of Lucifer. At all events, I have done my best to secure a fair hearing for Mr. Bright's

theory about novels and plays. I was not a convert to it; and I have not, so far, tried any attempt to write a novel about good people only: and by that admission I leave it open, of course, to any ill-natured critic to say that I might have made a better thing of it after all if I had ventured on such an experiment. But though I have not made the attempt, others more gifted may be inspired to try the enterprise and to see whether a fascinating novel of modern life cannot even yet be constructed out of the sayings and doings of good people only. It is quite beyond my reach of fancy, however, to imagine what an Adelphi melodrama would be without the figure of a villain appearing anywhere in it.

Mr. Bright's admiration for the poetry of Milton was absorbing — was what an American might call wholesouled. A relative of his told me once that when Bright came to his house he was afraid to leave a volume of Milton lying about, because the mere sight of it might draw Bright away from any talk even on pressing political subjects. During the struggles over the Reform Bill of 1866, Bright used to come to the 'Morning Star' office almost every night to tell me how the debates were going, and offer some suggestions as to the way in which this or that point of the controversy ought to be treated. Often and often when he had given his views on these subjects he relapsed into some talk about Milton and sometimes declaimed a few lines from his favourite poet, with a melody and majesty of voice and intonation which, all unstudied as his manner was, I have seldom heard equalled from pulpit or stage. It was a genuine pleasure to hear Bright quote from any poet he loved, but more especially from Milton. One strange thing was that, with all his devotion to

Milton, his rapture about Milton, he never allowed his own simple Anglo-Saxon style to be affected in the least by any of Milton's Hellenised or Latinised turns of expression. I heard him quote with exquisite feeling the line from Wordsworth's poem which asked whether the cuckoo is a bird 'or but a wandering voice.' I may say, too, that he delighted in Shelley's poem 'To a Skylark' and Logan's lines to the Cuckoo. Of the three poems — that of Wordsworth, that of Shelley, and that of Logan — he liked Logan's the best, as a whole; but the particular line from Wordsworth which I have mentioned held his fancy more than anything else in the three. I shall never forget the manner in which he quoted the words 'or but a wandering voice,' giving them additional expression and meaning by a quick gentle moving of his hand here and there, as if to indicate the places from which the wandering voice made itself successively heard. The late Dean Stanley heard Bright once at a public meeting quote a few lines from an Epistle of St. Paul's, and, when speaking of it afterwards, declared with emphasis that he should be glad if he could believe there was any clergyman in the Church of England who could deliver the words with the same exquisite effect. I had many talks with Bright on literary subjects, and especially on poetry; and while I often differed from him as to his estimates and his conclusions, and sometimes could not even accept his point of view when forming a judgment of this or that author or passage, I have always thought that it would not be possible for him to say anything about a book which was not in itself interesting and which did not offer some fresh idea for consideration. He did not admire Disraeli's novels even as political studies; but there I think he was prejudiced by his dislike for

Disraeli's career. I remarked to him once that after all, and when we had said everything we could say against Disraeli as a politician, there was something of which ordinary persons might feel proud in the fact that by his own abilities he had raised himself far above his original position in life, and had become not only the colleague of peers but sometimes the creator of peers. Bright replied that he too might feel proud of that if he did not remember something that was said in Lord Lytton's novel 'Rienzi' about one who had risen above his own class, but had only contrived to do so by severing his interests and his sympathies altogether from the class out of which he had arisen.

When I speak of Bright's dislike to Disraeli, I should say that it was a dislike political altogether, and not, so far as I know, in any way personal. Bright and Disraeli when they met in the House of Commons were on very friendly terms; and Disraeli, I know, had as high an opinion of Bright's eloquence as any of Bright's companions could possibly have had. Bright told me that he and Disraeli were sitting together one night — I think in the smoking room of the House of Commons — talking, like the pair in Kirke White's poem, 'of various things — of taxes, ministers and kings,' and, among other subjects, of the amount of time that had to be given up to the work of Parliament. Disraeli paused for a moment, and then said, 'You know, Bright, what you and I come here for — we both come here for fame.' Bright earnestly insisted that he came there for no purpose of the kind; but he assured me that it was impossible to convince Disraeli that he was serious in the disclaimer. Disraeli ceased to argue the point, and listened with a quiet half-sarcastic smile, evidently quite satisfied in his own mind that a man

who could make great speeches must make them with the desire of obtaining fame. Bright's objection to Disraeli was founded mainly on the assumption that Disraeli was and must be a Radical reformer at heart; that a man of his intellect could not be anything else; and that, therefore, he had become a Tory with the object of making his way to a high position in Parliament and in society. This sort of assumption or conclusion belonged to Bright's whole habit of mind, and he could not free himself from it. He judged everybody by a rigid moral standard which he had set up in his own mind, and which assumed that every honest man possessed of intelligence must really be in favour of an extended electoral suffrage. In this way Cobden had a far more liberal mind, and was quite able to understand that a man might differ absolutely from him on the most essential principles of Radicalism, and yet be deserving of confidence and admiration.

Bright had a bluntness of speech which sometimes seriously offended those who were not accustomed to make allowance for his occasional abruptness of manner. He was once dining with a member of Parliament who at the time had made a somewhat distinguished figure in the House, and who had no mean idea of his own rising importance. Bright asked him what his views were upon a certain question which just then had begun to interest public opinion. The member thus appealed to gave a frank statement of his views — views which did not then fall in with those of the Liberal party in general, but which some of us at least might easily have supposed to be the views of that Liberal member in particular. Bright listened patiently to the exposition, and then said in a grave and fatherly tone of admonition, 'If these are your views, I think if

I were you I would never again acknowledge them in public.' 'Why should I not acknowledge them?' was the astonished and very natural question. 'Because,' Bright replied, 'if you express such opinions people will say that you are a fool.' I remember that on one occasion a rising Liberal member of the House of Commons was offered a place in the Liberal administration of the time. This Liberal member was a friend of mine, and was well aware of the fact that I had frequent opportunities of talking to Bright. He asked me to talk to Bright about the offer that had been made, and to ask him whether he thought that if my friend were to accept office he would be considered at liberty to vote independently and according to his own individual opinions on certain special questions which were not then made matter of agreement one way or the other by either of the two great political parties. I spoke to Bright upon the subject, and received from him an answer which was concise, but which was also unmistakably contemptuous. 'Tell him,' said Bright, 'if he wants my opinion, that I have no doubt his chief and his colleagues will let him stand upon his head if he likes, so long as he does n't spoil a critical division.' I am afraid that I did not exactly convey the reply in Mr. Bright's own language. I dare say I said something to the effect that in Mr. Bright's opinion no Prime Minister would object to a man of my friend's abilities and independence occasionally taking his own course on questions to which he was already pledged, and which had not been made one way or the other a part of the policy of the administration.

I think the public man whom Mr. Bright regarded with the strongest dislike was Lord Palmerston. I have often wondered why, to a man of Mr. Bright's

sense of humour, there never seemed to be anything fascinating in Palmerston's capacity for a rattling good joke. But Bright took Palmerston seriously, and would not understand a joke or consent to see the humour of it where it seemed to be trifling with grave national questions. At the same time it is only right to say that in Palmerston's case, as in Disraeli's, Bright's dislike was far more political than personal. I happen to know that when charges were made against Lord Palmerston by Radical speakers and writers on one or two occasions where the charges did not seem fully justified by anything the world knew of Palmerston's character and life, Bright was always stern in condemning the use of such accusations or even of insinuations tending to imply that Palmerston had shown any want of personal rectitude. I remember a time when a certain member of the Tory opposition was commonly talked of by his adversaries as one who habitually prepared himself for an impassioned speech by an extra liberal absorption of stimulant. One of the London journals had a comic version of a scene in the House of Commons in which a portion of an imaginary speech by this Conservative orator was so set out in word and phrase, and so punctuated by interruptions and interjections, as to convey very clearly the idea that the stimulant inspired the eloquence. It was an unpardonable sort of joke, to be sure; but it was meant as a joke, and some of us were frivolous enough to laugh at it. Mr. Bright was not one of those who laughed: he took the joke quite seriously; he denounced it in conversation as a scandal and a disgrace to the Press, and declared that even if the common accusation against the lampooned man were believed by the writer to be true, that fact would not in

the least justify or excuse the author of such a piece of malign buffoonery or the editor who allowed it to appear in print. Of course Bright was perfectly right; and such a scurrilous sort of joking very rarely indeed forms a part even of our caricature literature. I only tell the story here to show that Bright made his moral laws apply to the protection of his political opponents as well as to that of his political associates. The man thus held up to ridicule was a man whose political career Bright especially detested; and, for aught I know to the contrary, he may have had reason to believe, as nine people out of ten at the time thought they had, that the midnight speeches of the Tory debater were sometimes inspired by an influence not merely that of political partisanship. It was all the same to Bright; he thought that the man was unfairly attacked, and that was enough for him. I remember another occasion when a very distinguished member of a Government was made the subject of some most serious charges, because of the manner in which he had disposed of certain public offices. Now, this man while in the House of Commons had been one of the keenest and the bitterest opponents of many of Bright's favourite measures and of Bright himself. He was a man of great ability, a master of a certain kind of vitriolic sarcasm which told immensely with the House. Many of us believed the charges to be true, and they formed the subject of severe articles in some of the Liberal newspapers. To Bright's mind there seemed something ungenerous and even unjust in these attacks. He spoke to me and wrote to me on the subject more than once. He pointed out that the accusations were, for the most part, only inferences or assumptions, and insisted that there was no evidence whatever of misapplication of power in the

appointments made by the man in question. He went farther than that; he said that from all that he could hear the man's personal character was blameless, that in his private as well as in his public life he had shown much kindly inclination and had done many generous deeds, but that, owing to the conduct of certain of his relatives, he had aroused criticism and made enemies through no fault of his own — and in fact Bright was as earnest and as eager that the man should be judged fairly and liberally as if he had been one of Bright's own closest friends. I am afraid that we younger men at the time made Bright seem responsible for many a policy of attack which our combative pens originated in the columns of the 'Morning Star.' It may interest some of my countrymen to hear that at the time of the Fenian troubles in Ireland Bright sometimes found fault with the 'Morning Star' for not pleading the case of the Fenians as often and as earnestly as he thought it ought to be done. I was then editor of the paper; and I was under the impression that I had gone as far as I could go in the teeth of general public opinion in England with a defence of Fenian prisoners. But Bright did not think so. He once said to me, 'You seem to me to be only half an Irishman; why don't you stand up for these poor fellows and for merciful dealing with them more often than you do?' I urged that we had had many leading articles on the subject and that we intended to have many more. But Bright went on to say, 'You ought to bring it before the public every day in season and out of season.' I mildly pleaded that I had to think of the interests of the paper and of its proprietors, and that we were already becoming terribly unpopular with the greater part of the British public. 'If I were you,' said Bright, 'I would not let that affect

me for one moment.' 'But,' I argued, 'the paper is not mine, and I have to think of the interests of the proprietors.' 'I would n't think of the interests of the proprietors,' Bright warmly replied; 'I would only think of what was right and just.' In vain I argued that if we pressed the matter too far we should only cease to have any hearing at all from the British public — Bright held to his point, and maintained that we ought to speak the truth in the strongest terms we could use and let the result take care of itself. I am firmly convinced that that is the manner in which Bright would have acted himself on any public question. He would have held to what he believed to be right and just and let the result take care of itself. Probably he was wanting in that quality of statesmanship which is content to make the best it can out of the existing conditions of things, to trim one's sails a little and catch a breeze now and then, to recognise the virtues of compromise. But it was impossible not to admire the adamantine strength of his principles; even while, perhaps, one recognised that to his sturdy combative nature there was something of a pleasurable excitement in meeting opposition face to face. Bright was curiously impatient of all manner of speculative opinion, at least where political subjects were concerned; he was a great admirer of John Stuart Mill, and especially admired him for his courage in coming out of his study to stand up on public platforms in defence of the Northern side during the great American Civil War. He had the profoundest respect for Mill's intellect and expanded knowledge. 'Mill,' he said to me once, 'lives in light.' But he became impatient when Mill went in for the representation of minorities and became an opponent of vote by ballot. Bright

maintained that a man by setting himself to be a thinker might think himself out of practical politics altogether. If Mill would come out of his tower-chamber of thinking and follow his human instincts it would be a great deal better for him and for society. 'Mill,' he said, 'sees men as trees, walking.' He thought that some of the writers in the 'Morning Star' went rather too far in their admiration for Mill and seemed to treat him as a sort of sublime intellectual power commissioned to deliver oracles, and too great to be argued with by ordinary human beings. The truth is, as I have said before, that Bright's mind was narrowed down to the promotion of the specific reforms which he had in his mind and at his heart; and he could not be quite convinced that anybody had any real business in public life but to argue directly for or directly against those schemes of reform. He had little admiration for the university systems of England until men like Goldwin Smith and the late Thorold Rogers came out as Radical politicians, and then he began to admit that there might be some reason for the existence of such institutions. He was the most heroic and devoted champion of the Federal cause that England possessed during the great American struggle; and of course he was a supporter of the policy which sent out Lord Ripon and Sir Stafford Northcote, as he then was, and Professor Montague Bernard as commissioners to Washington to arrange for arbitration on the 'Alabama' claims, and the Convention of Geneva which finally settled them. But Bright was by no means willing to approve of the manner in which the American Government of that day tried to make out what were called the cumulative claims. He wrote and spoke sharply and clearly of the lawyer-like or attorney-like manner in which some

of these claims were converted into a monstrous bill of speculative costs, which he considered unworthy the dignity of the whole international controversy.

I think the public man to whom he was most devoted after Cobden was Gladstone. I remember angering him much one night by saying somewhat needlessly that as an orator, he, Bright, captivated me even more than did Gladstone. He told me in his good-humoured blunt way that I really could not have considered what I was talking about, or I could never have said such a thing. Then he went on to argue the question as composedly, the burst of anger being over, as if we had been discussing the respective merits of Demosthenes and Cicero. He explained that whereas he, Bright, could make an effective speech now and then, Gladstone was always ready for the battle — had nothing to do at any moment but to mount his war-horse and lead a charge. There was not the slightest affectation about this, if indeed anyone could possibly think of Bright's being affected about anything; it was simply the sincere conviction of a man who knew that he had a comrade more capable of continuous action than himself and was honestly anxious that all the world should know the fact as well. When Bright was not inclined to argue a question he had sometimes a rough good-humoured way of getting out of the debate with a humorous turn of phrase which interdicted controversy. During the height of the American Civil War I heard an eminent writer on political economy laying down the law to him on the impossibility of the Federal Government coming successfully out of the struggle. The economist arrayed facts and figures together in the most appalling way, with the object of proving that even if the Northern States should come out of the struggle with a tech-

nical victory, it must be only to sink into complete national bankruptcy. When he found himself growing exhausted for want of breath, he closed his exposition with the words, 'Now, Mr. Bright, what have you to say to that?' Bright paused for a moment as if he were thinking the whole matter out, and then blandly replied, 'Well, my opinion is that the Northern States will manage somehow to muddle through.'

Bright had a certain impatience of the man who 'had been there and ought to know' — that terrible man in politics who settles every question in foreign affairs, the capacity of every nation, the virtue of every national cause, the possibility of any enlightened future for some downtrodden people, by some passing experience of his own as a traveller with perhaps one of Cook's excursion tickets limited to a certain number of days of travel. Such a man I once heard expounding to Bright the whole condition of things in Jamaica, on the strength of a short visit he had made to the island. This was at the time when the conduct of Governor Eyre in the suppression of the Jamaica disturbances was the subject of impassioned public controversy in England. The man who had been there and ought to know was explaining to Bright that there was no other possible way of dealing with the negroes than just that which Governor Eyre had adopted; and he said, 'You see, Mr. Bright, I speak from my own observation.' Bright blandly replied, 'I know a great many fairly intelligent men who have lived all their lives in England and whose observation I could not trust for a moment when it came to be a question of how the English people ought to be dealt with.' 'I don't understand the gold question myself,' he said to me once — 'some people do — they tell me.' One night he came to the

'Morning Star' office rather early, and stayed for a long time talking with me over political affairs and other things, into which I dare say Milton made his way somehow. At last he suddenly got up and, looking at his watch, said he had forgotten to pay and discharge his cabman when he came from the House, and that he had now kept him more than three hours waiting. I was endeavouring to offer some mild condolence on that waste of money; but he said, with his familiar cheery smile, 'Well, it doesn't much matter after all: it's only going into the "Gazette" one day sooner.' I was so taken with the philosophy of the remark that I adopted it in one of my own novels and put it into the mouth of my hero — a brilliant heedless Irishman with a long pedigree and an emptied purse. Bright was greatly amused both at the adaptation and at my description of the personage into whose mouth I had put his words. My acquaintance with Bright was interrupted by my first visit to the United States, which lasted for nearly two years. When I came back I renewed my old acquaintanceship with him, of course, and he was much interested in hearing many things that I had to tell him about my impressions of men and cities in America. From him I had received a letter of introduction to the late Charles Sumner, then one of the most prominent and influential figures in American politics, with whom on most subjects of interest Mr. Bright was commonly in agreement. The 'Morning Star' in the meantime had ceased to exist.

CHAPTER VI

SOME LETTERS FROM JOHN BRIGHT

I PUBLISH here, and for the first time, some of the letters which I received from Mr. Bright during the years when I had the conduct of the 'Morning Star' as its editor. I publish them with the consent of Mr. John A. Bright, eldest son of the great orator and patriot. Only a very short explanation is necessary to make the subject of each letter quite intelligible to the public of this day. The first which I give was written in reply to a letter of mine asking him whether it was true, as stated in some of the newspapers, that he was about to take part in a deputation to Lord Palmerston to press Palmerston on the subject of reform in the electoral franchise — with all Liberals the great question of the day.

'ROCHDALE, July 26, 1865.

'DEAR SIR, — I have not been in a deputation to Lord Palmerston for many years; and it is doubtful if I shall be again. He is so insincere and unscrupulous that I am unwilling to go to him on any matter.

'I doubt if a deputation of *earnest* men could be got together sufficiently numerous to produce any effect.

'To me it is not clear that we have any interest in any movement for reform conducted by Palmerston; he might, and probably would betray us at the last mo-

ment; he might not withdraw the Bill, as before, but he might accept amendments making it worthless — £8 for boroughs and £20 for counties; and he would have no difficulty even in secretly suggesting such propositions to the Tories and the worst class of Whigs, that he might adopt them.

'I would rather wait till he is off the political stage, when the question could be in hands more friendly and more honest.

'Mr. Jas. Beal has written to me about a Reform banquet in London in November. I don't know if anything will be done; but you might see him and ascertain if anything is decided; and possibly you might say something for it if it be determined to have the banquet.

'The inclosed may serve for a paragraph for the "Star" — the facts are rather amusing.

'Yours very truly,

'JOHN BRIGHT.'

The following letter refers to the crisis which arose when, on the death of Lord Palmerston, a new Administration was about to be formed under Earl Russell and Mr. Gladstone.

'ROCHDALE, Nov. 1, 1865.

'MY DEAR SIR, — I returned you the letter last evening. You will understand that my opinion was given entirely and precisely as if my name had not been mentioned in it.

'It is almost certain that no state of affairs will or can arise that could require or induce me to take any office in a Government; but that the "Below the Gangway" section of the House has a right to more influence in the Cabinet is clear enough, and was admitted at the

Willis's Rooms meeting. It may therefore be useful to have this point discussed if anybody is sufficiently interested about it to enter upon it.

'Some of the other papers are taking this tone; but I do not know that they mention names; and it is not likely that they will mention mine, as I am not much in their good graces, which is perhaps rather fortunate than otherwise.

'I think it not unlikely that there will be some changes in the Government; but nothing will be decided before the 14th inst., when I believe the Cabinet will meet again, and when, I presume, some conclusion as to future policy must be come to.

'When Palmerston's Government was formed, Lord Russell proposed that Mr. Cobden, Mr. Gibson and I should be asked to join it. Lord Palmerston made no objection on his own account, so far as I know; but he said that, owing to opinions expressed by me in recent speeches (touching the House of Lords), certain or some persons whose support was essential to his Government would not give that support if I were included in it; and therefore he could not include or ask me.

'But Mr. Gibson was included, and a place was left for Mr. Cobden, who was then in America, which place he declined on his arrival here, as you know. So Lord Russell wished to carry out the Willis's Rooms compact, and to deal fairly with the whole party. This is for your information in case anything should require you to say anything about the Government and myself.

'Yours very truly, J. B.'

The Jamaica disturbances which broke out in the early days of October, 1865, led to a terrible, indeed a lawless repression, one act of which, the summary exe-

cution of George William Gordon, a coloured member of the Legislature, formed the subject of the two letters which follow.

'Rochdale, Nov. 13, 1865.

'Dear Sir, — In writing on the Jamaica question, I think Mr. Chesson might give some information as to the government there, and the injustice to the negro.

'Further, I *would strongly urge Mr. Cardwell to send out an honest Commission* to inquire into the whole matter and into the oppression, if any, which the negroes have suffered.

'I believe a Commission would show the necessity for a thorough change in the government and legislation of the island.

'The American question looks worse. The States will not propose anything at present, I believe. Their claims can wait as well as ours; and we may first feel it necessary to propose some mode of settlement.

'I suspect Lord Russell has built up a difficulty for himself. I think you should see Mr. Gibson to-morrow or *Wednesday morning*. At the Cabinet to-morrow something will be done about *places* and *policy*, and you may get to know something. — In haste,

'Yours truly, J. B.'

'Rochdale, Dec. 6, 1865.

'Dear Sir, — The Jamaica affair deepens in horror. Your second article to-day astounds me.

'I think you should write a strong article asking what the *Government* is doing? Cardwell, I fear, is too weak for the case. Tell them plainly that *whilst they say nothing* and probably are doing nothing, the reign of murder under pretence of law is continued. The

country has a right to know what the Government is doing — what it intends.

'But if the Government is slack, then what should the country do?

'Form a powerful committee and ask for funds — they will get more than they need.

'Let the committee announce their determination to have a rigid inquiry, and to bring to justice in this country the Governor and his pliant and bloody tools. Mrs. Gordon, if need be, should come to England to plead for and demand justice at the Bar of Parliament. The case of Clark seems about as horrible as that of Gordon.

'Able lawyers should be engaged; and the country should undertake to do what it is to be feared the Government is slack in beginning.

'I fear the Administration will break down under the obloquy it will so richly merit, if something is not done at once.

'*You should write this article in a grave and forcible style befitting the case and the question.*

'If you could have the question discussed by some good lawyer in your columns, it would be well. Mr. Ludlow would give you a ready and able assistance — you should see him.

'I have written to advise this committee to some of the Anti-Slavery men. — In haste,

'Yours truly,

'JOHN BRIGHT.'

The next letter tells its own story.

'ROCHDALE, Dec. 31, 1865.

'DEAR SIR, — I send you a "Caledonian Mercury" containing report of a meeting of farm labourers who

are forming a Trades Union for their defence and for raising their wages. Can you find room for the report? and I think it affords subject for a leader. No class is worse paid than farm labourers. Land has doubled — trebled — quadrupled in value; and yet the man who works upon it, is where he was, or worse. In the southern and western counties of England his position is terrible — John Cross in Dorsetshire with 8*s.* a week for twenty-four years under one master. In Somersetshire, 9*s.* a week — rarely as much as 10*s.*

'Why is this? Ignorance of labourer; no habit of combination even for discussion of their condition; dread of farmer — a few farmers can make the parish too hot for him, and he dare not go beyond the Poor Law boundary, formerly of the parish, now of the union.

'This Scotch movement arises from extra intelligence of Scotch labourer. I hope it may spread and finally reach Dorsetshire.

'Labourers will make mistakes and violate political economy in some points probably; but they will learn better as they go on; and the general result will be to increase, perhaps nearly to double, the agricultural wages of Great Britain. — In haste,

'Yours truly,

'JOHN BRIGHT.'

We return for a moment to the Jamaica trouble. The reader will observe that I am taking the letters, as far as is possible, according to the order of their date.

'Jan. 2, 1866.

'DEAR SIR, — I have your note. I think Cardwell very weak, and the whole thing badly done; and it is

absurd to put three Tories on such a mission, unless the Government think to choke off Tory opposition in Parliament. I may say something on the subject to-morrow night.

'I would not assail the Government; but would point out in friendly terms the mistake they make, and the chance of losing public confidence by blunders of this kind.

'I think Cardwell's speech at Oxford very unsatisfactory on the Jamaica business.

'I have no news and have heard nothing of the rumour to which you referred; but I see the "Spectator" writes in an excitement about it.

'The Cabinet meets on the 9th; and then Lord Russell will explain his views on Reform, I suppose.

'I intend to explain *mine* to-morrow, nothing unforeseen preventing.

'Yours very truly,

'JOHN BRIGHT.'

The letter following may surprise some readers who still cherish the old-fashioned idea that Mr. Bright was an uncompromising republican opposed to all monarchs and monarchies.

'ROCHDALE, Jan. 19, 1866.

'DEAR SIR, — I would suggest that you should not insert any letter or paragraphs criticising the Queen or the propositions as to money for the Princess. It is no use making enemies; and the Court is not adverse to the Reform cause.

'I know this has been commented on as showing that your paper is offensive to the Queen, and the most strong for Reform.

'I would say nothing in this direction. If countries

have monarchies, these expenses are inevitable and perhaps not improper. I would not allow any correspondent to make mischief, especially at this moment.

'You will understand what I mean.

'I think the paper is looking well, and the writing is *good*. My "Evening Star" of this morning is not well printed. I hope it is an exceptional case.

'If Mr. Layard has resigned and will not be pacified, I am not surprised — but it will weaken the Government; for his place will not be easy to fill up, and he may be ill-natured when not in office, as many men, I am sorry to say, are. — In haste,

'Yours truly, J. B.'

Earl Russell and Mr. Gladstone resigned office on June 19, 1866, having been defeated on a clause in their Reform Bill, and the inevitable result was the coming into power of Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli. There was some little delay, however, about the arrangements, and Mr. Bright writes as follows in the next two letters:

'June 28, 1866.

'Dear Sir, — Derby asks some days yet before he will say if he can take the Government. The *Cave* do not join him, and he knows he cannot go on alone; and possibly he may give it up.

'There is a sort of panic among the Carlton mob lest he should fail; and their prospects are supposed to be less bright than they were.

'Perhaps the Tory concern may "bust up" before it is fairly running; but this is too good to be true.

'They joined us on the Conspiracy Bill, beat Palmerston, and came in for a few months. Derby is under-

stood to have resolved not to take office again, as he has done twice already, without a majority or the hope of one. Without the *Cave* he can have no majority now, or after an election; so he may not have the courage or the folly to go on.

'Yours truly, J. B.'

'Rochdale, July 1, 1866.

'Dear Sir, — If Derby forms a Government from his own party, I think he is liable to strong condemnation on the ground of his consciousness that "constitutionally" he has no right to be a Minister. He has no majority in the House, and he has *no hope of getting one.* He knows the objects and principles of his party are those of a minority of the constituencies, and of a miserable minority of the people. Still he takes office; fills up the offices with *names* rather than with *men* suitable for them; and puts what he will call a Government in motion. But it is no Government; it is "*constitutionally*" *but an usurpation* impudent and ridiculous, and must come to an end with humiliation to its authors, and injury to the country.

'He makes this mischief of a crisis; a change of offices, new elections to be followed, perhaps, by a dissolution, new Ministers and new elections *without any reasonable hope of success;* and he makes a few judges, perhaps a bishop, some scores or hundreds of partisan magistrates where they are not wanted, and gives six months' or nine months' salary to the hungry crew around him, with the chance of a pension to one or two of them whose necessary *two years of office* may be made up by temporary accessions of their party to power.

'Disraeli has got and now enjoys £2,000 a year pension for the *two years* of his official life, made up of

the two short terms when the Tories were in power in 1852 and 1859.

'You might show the contemptible objects of a party capable only of obstruction, unable to hold and keep the Government, and having no principles or policy which the country will adopt.

'No Government was formed up to yesterday; something may be done before you receive this; but there is ample matter for severe criticism on the Derby leadership. They are *not good enough*, even for *the traitors of our ranks*, as *those traitors seem to judge them*.

'Yours sincerely,

'JOHN BRIGHT.'

The next letter concerns the formation of the Dominion of Canada.

'ROCHDALE, Oct. 7, 1867.

'DEAR SIR, — You will probably have seen that the Nova Scotia elections have gone terribly against the Confederation; fifty-four out of fifty-seven seats being against it.

'I inclose two letters I have received from the colony: you will not publish the names of the writers or my name in connection with them; but they will show what is said there. You should get a copy of some Nova Scotia newspaper with all the particulars.

'You will recollect that I advised the Government and the House not to include Nova Scotia; but to allow the general election to take place to ascertain the opinion of the colony before tying it up with Canada; but Government and House here were deaf to my counsel.

'The nearness of the colony to the State of Maine is an important element in this matter, and the colo-

nists may possibly prefer New England to the new Dominion.

'The whole question is one deserving of an article, if you can put it in some judicious hands.

'Yours very truly,

'JOHN BRIGHT.'

Mr. Bright felt strongly, as I have said already, about the tone taken by the London papers generally in discussing the Fenian outbreak in 1867, and it will be seen he is by no means satisfied even with the writing in the 'Morning Star.'

'LLANDUDNO, Nov. 8, 1867.

'DEAR SIR, — I am surprised that the leaders on the Manchester Fenians should so readily give up Allen to the gallows — asserting even that he glories in blood-shedding.

'The fact is that he denies having shot the poor man Brett; and the convicts or prisoners say that the man who did it is not even in custody. Allen's uncle and aunt called on me last Saturday and urged that he was not guilty of the murder, and that his life should not be taken on the sort of evidence tendered.

'The witnesses are now discredited; and I think you should urge that to hang any after the breakdown of the evidence will be much to be deplored.

'I am certain that to hang these men will embitter the whole Irish question. Allen is but nineteen, a hot, enthusiastic youth, impelled by a passion for nationality and thoughtless of the folly or crime of the conspiracy.

'The "Star" should not say a word in favour of hanging anybody. There are plenty of writers on the Press to do that. — In haste,

'Yours truly, JOHN BRIGHT.'

'ROCHDALE, Dec. 18, 1867.

'DEAR SIR, — I am afraid you are doing the "sensational" very strongly about the "outrage."

'People will think you are afraid of being thought disloyal, and so write up to the "horror" of the occasion.

'The "Star," more than any other London paper, has a right to look calmly on these sad, shocking events. They are but the natural results of all that has gone before in connection with the Irish question; and, I suppose, now, when something of a crisis has come, "statesmen" will begin to think something will have to be done.

'In Ireland Government is being dissolved. Did you see the case before the magistrates where Mr. Sullivan and Sir John Gray refused to become Crown witnesses? Such a character or office is ruin to the reputation in Ireland.

'The Tory Government is reaping the results of Tory principles.

'Desperate men are coming to the front; and desperate deeds are done. After a certain amount of exasperation and agitation, certain men become reckless and cruel as devils; and our statesmanship is helpless till things come near this point. I would not pile the "horrors" needlessly, or spread rumours without sufficient foundation.

'I am not in the midst of the "terror," and perhaps see and speak more calmly than I might if in London. Therefore forgive these hints if you think them not seasonable.

'Always sincerely yours,

'JOHN BRIGHT.'

In the next letter we come back to the question of Franchise Reform.

'ROCHDALE, Jan. 11, 1868.

'DEAR SIR, — I send two extracts from American papers which may be worth putting in your paper.

'Did you observe Mr. Ellice's speech at St. Andrews? He is for adding to the number of the House and preserving the small boroughs — in short, for supporting Disraeli, and against Gladstone in this matter in the coming session.

'If you refer back I think you will find that Mr. Ellice went against Gladstone last session, and I rather think in 1866. If he did not vote against, his mind has been against.

'I suspect he is one of the Whigs who dislike Gladstone and will never willingly act under him or with him.

'A quiet thoughtful article on his speech might be useful in Scotland.

'Scotch Liberals should know that men who prefer Disraeli to Gladstone are not Liberals in reality; and they should be asked which they prefer. To accept Disraeli's plan is to make English rotten boroughs *perpetual*, and a rotten borough in England is as *injurious to Scotland* as if in Scotland.

'To give Scotland seven new seats and not take them from England is to diminish the value of the gift. Ireland, too, may complain, as to add to the House is to lessen her share of the whole. The House is now like a *mob* in all times of excitement; and to add to it is folly, or worse.

'If Lancashire and London are ever to have more members, is the House to be again increased, and all to preserve rotten boroughs?

'You should show the Scotch Liberals how much it is to their interest to go with Gladstone. He will give them more than Disraeli, and in the shape they want it.

'Such men as Mr. Ellice are but disguised Tories in acting thus. If they are not Tories they are something worse, and are moved by jealousy and dislike of Mr. Gladstone. — In haste,

'Yours truly,

'JOHN BRIGHT.'

CHAPTER VII

JOHN STUART MILL

The same sort of happy accident which procured for me the acquaintanceship of Browning and gave me the chance, only frustrated by Fate, of dining at Thackeray's house, obtained for me my first opportunity of knowing John Stuart Mill. Soon after I had settled down into a resident of London I wrote an article for the 'Westminster Review,' of which Mill had been for a long time the editor. I had sent the article merely on chance, and without much hope of its being accepted. It was accepted, however, by the then editor, Dr. John Chapman, who afterwards became my friend, and it was fortunate enough to attract Mr. Mill's attention, and it led to an acquaintanceship. I was at that time, as I have been ever since, a devoted admirer of Mr. Mill's writings, and of his personal and public character; but up to that time Mr. Mill had taken no part whatever in political life. The manner in which he had treated the Irish Land Question in one of his books had won for him the admiration of all Irish Nationalists, and he had been invited to accept the nomination as representative of an Irish county in the House of Commons with the certainty of a successful contest. Mill, however, declined the invitation, and it was not until years afterwards that he could be persuaded to come forward as a candidate for a parliamentary seat. Physical constitu-

tion, intellectual peculiarities, temperament and habits, all seemed to mark out Mill as a man destined for a life of habitual seclusion. He was not by any means an ungenial or unsocial man — indeed, he enjoyed the society of his intimate friends; but then his intimate friends were very few in number, and the public in general knew him only as a writer, or, perhaps I should say, as an influence, and hardly thought of him as a living man. Over the minds of all the thoughtful men, especially of the younger and rising generation, his influence was immense. It was well said of him that he had reconciled political economy with humanity, and that was exactly the kind of feeling with which most of us regarded his life and his teaching. But until the outbreak of the American Civil War no one ever looked upon him as a man likely to take any part in a public agitation, or even to show himself upon a public platform. His very appearance was unknown to the vast mass of the community; no photographs of him were to be seen in the shop windows. The few of us who had actually seen him were less likely than ever, after they had first seen him, to associate him with any manner of public discussion. His pale face, his emaciated features, the nervous twitching of the eyelids and the lips, the shy and hesitating manner, the voice that seemed unwilling to exert its strength, all seemed to mark him as one whose vocation it was to teach from the study and not from the platform. Yet it was pressed upon Mill by his friends that it was his duty to show himself in public, to speak from platforms in St. James's Hall and elsewhere, and even to enter the House of Commons; and it was a part of Mill's noble nature that he could not refuse any call which seemed honestly to invite him to a public duty.

When the promoters of the movement to return him to the House of Commons as one of the representatives of Westminster at the General Election of 1865, came to canvass the local electors, the first great difficulty they had to contend with was that three out of every four of the honest traders and shopkeepers had hardly ever heard of him; and the few who knew anything of his books had a vague impression that the author was long since dead and buried. Not a few of the older electors of Westminster confused him in their minds with his father, James Mill, the historian of British India and the friend of Jeremy Bentham; and they had it in their minds that there was but one Mill, and they knew that that Mill was in the grave. The very men who formed the executive of his committee could not say that they knew John Stuart Mill even by sight. Some of the leading Tories in Westminster, half in jest and half for a serious electioneering purpose, sent abroad an appalling report that there was no such man in existence as John Stuart Mill. 'Do you know Mr. Mill yourself? Did you ever see him?' was a question often put in perfect good faith to some of us who helped to canvass for Mr. Mill in Westminster. In most cases the earnest canvasser had to answer that question with an apologetic negative, and with an assurance, often doubtfully received, that when the proper time came Mr. Mill would be seen upon a public platform. Mill, I should say, had positively declined to take any part in the work of canvassing. The services of Dr. Chapman were brought into pressing requisition, because he was one of the very few concerned in the election who could really boast of a personal acquaintance with Stuart Mill. Yet when Mill came to stand before the electors of Westminster and to address them from a

public platform, he made a very decided and very favourable impression upon his audience. His voice was clear, and capable of some variety of expression, and although he had now and then a nervous stammer, yet he was able to keep up a sustained exposition and argument with an ease, a directness, and a force which kept his listeners attentive. For a man who was nearly sixty years of age when he first entered into a political contest it was admitted on all sides that he bore himself well, and surprised most of his friends and all of his enemies by the capacity which he showed for success in his absolutely new field of work. Then he had a directness in answering the heckling questions which appealed to audiences not too well accustomed to political straightforwardness. On one occasion he was asked by some hostile questioner whether he had not, in one of his essays, declared that the English poorer classes were given to telling untruths. Mill came promptly forward, and without a word of excuse or explanation as a preliminary to his reply, gave out the distinct answer, 'Yes, I did.' Many of the London workmen who heard his words told me afterwards that they could not but admire the man who gave so brave and straightforward an answer to a dangerous question. Then, after he had made his direct emphatic reply, Mill gave his explanation — the explanation which all who knew him or knew his writings must already have anticipated. He explained that the conditions of the English poor, the manner in which they were left wholly without education, the utter neglect with which they were treated by the State, the pitiful temptations to which they were exposed in the course of their day's struggles for a living, the ignoble necessity for conciliating the favour of those who could give them employment, and

of their betters, as they were called generally — all these causes had rendered it hard indeed for the poorer class, as a class, to set up a too high and rigid standard of truth. I am sure Mill left the platform that day with a popularity distinctly increased by the effect of the question and the answer; and I am much inclined to think that the Tory elector who put the question was, on the whole, 'sorry he spoke,' to use the slang phraseology of a later day. Mill, of course, was returned for Westminster. The day when he first entered the House of Commons was the first day on which John Bright and Mill ever saw each other. I believe Cobden and Mill never met. Among the few friends or acquaintances Mill had in the House of Commons were the late John Arthur Roebuck, the late Henry Fawcett, and the late Robert Lowe, afterwards Lord Sherbrooke. I had many opportunities of meeting Mr. Mill between 1865 and 1868. The 'Morning Star' was naturally and necessarily a supporter of the political doctrines to which Mill had given his faith, and to which his advocacy and his authority had been of such immense advantage. But besides this, most of the men who wrote leading articles for the 'Morning Star' were, like myself, especial devotees of Stuart Mill, and looked up to him as the pupil might have looked up to his teacher in the country and the age of Pericles. I was greatly impressed by the variety and the depth of Mill's information on almost every subject which was brought under his notice, and at the originality of his views on some subjects which might have appeared to be entirely outside the range of his observation. Once I talked to him about the Fenian movement which was then beginning to make itself felt in Ireland and also in England. I knew, of course, that Mill had

thoroughly studied the Irish Land Question, and had prepared the way among thinking minds for the policy which Mr. Gladstone afterwards introduced. People in London, even among Liberal politicians, were disposed to make very light of the Fenian movement. I asked Mill what he thought about it, and he went into the matter very seriously and earnestly. He declared it his conviction that it was destined to be an entirely new force in Irish politics. 'In the first instance,' he said, 'it had got hold of an attractive name; the word Fenian appealed to those half-poetic sensibilities with regard to past history and minstrelsy and heroic myth with which the whole Celtic nature was so thoroughly impregnated.' This observation of his interested me at once, for I was well aware that even amongst highly educated Englishmen there were very few indeed to whom the romantic and legendary meaning of the word Fenian conveyed any manner of idea. Then, again, Mill went on to point out that while other Irish rebellions had had leaders of distinction and even of social rank, the Fenian movement was led by men whose names were absolutely unknown not only to the vast majority of Englishmen, but to a large proportion of Irishmen as well. The Rebellion of '98, Mill observed, had for its leaders Lord Edward Fitzgerald, a man of the highest rank, and Wolfe Tone, a man who had won distinction and position in Irish politics before the Rebellion was thought of, and a number of men of the landlord class, and others to whom a peasant population would naturally look up as leaders, and whose call to arms they would follow as if it were a trumpet call. The Fenian movement, on the other hand, had sprung from the very soil and from the very streets; it had been nurtured by no influences coming from the classes

higher placed in society; it was a movement created altogether by the harsh and exceptional conditions to which the Irish peasantry were subjected; and it had the sympathy and support of the vast population of Irish emigrants who had found a home in the American States. 'Wolfe Tone,' said Mill, 'had to look to Carnot and to Napoleon.' The Fenian of to-day looked to his Irish brother across the ocean, and could count on his sympathy, no matter how the intrigues of statesmen and diplomatists might work in the opposite direction. Therefore Mill gave it as his strong conviction that the Fenian movement was likely to take hold of the vast mass of the disaffected in Ireland, and could not be got rid of by the use of a little extra force on the part of the police and the soldiery. This was not by any means the only occasion when I had an opportunity of talking with Mill on Irish affairs, and when I found that his knowledge of the condition and the feeling of Ireland was something far deeper and truer than that possessed by many a highly educated Englishman, even among English public men who were in sympathy with Ireland and were sincerely anxious to improve her political and social condition.

I made many observations of the same kind when conversing with Mill on quite different subjects. I remember talking with him about German literature, of which he did not profess to have any special knowledge, and of which, nevertheless, I found he knew a great deal more than some of us did who fancied that we had made it an almost absorbing study. In one of these conversations he used an expression to me which he reproduced and more fully developed in his 'Inaugural Address to the University of St. Andrews.'

We were speaking about Goethe, and I mentioned a

saying of Goethe's to the effect that the beautiful was higher than the good — a saying which I confessed had always somewhat puzzled me. Mill said, with his quiet smile, that he had always understood it to mean that the beautiful was higher than the good because the beautiful was the good made perfect. That interpretation of Goethe's meaning seemed to me then, and seems to me now, to be absolutely faultless and final. Mill told me at the same time that he had not been reading much German of late owing to his many new occupations, and that he did not feel particularly strong on German. I think he told me that the languages he knew best after English, were classic Greek and French; and he told me that he had never really learned French or Greek in the ordinary sense, but had simply learned them from his father, word by word, or step by step, just as he had learned English. Since that time I remember coming on that passage in Greville's 'Diary,' in which Greville speaks of young Mill when he first met him, and adds that he had heard that young Mill was a cleverer man than his father. I do not know what were Mill's acquirements in languages, and I never ventured to ask him; but I believe that although he never set up as a linguist, his acquaintance with foreign tongues was unusually large, liberal, and exact.

I may mention one or two anecdotes associated with Mill's name, although they certainly do not pretend to throw any light on his gifts or on his fame. I listened in the gallery of the House of Commons to the first great speech made by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton after he had got back to the House, determined to retrieve his former failure. It was an extraordinary speech in every sense. It proved to be a piece of laboured eloquence so far as felicitous phrase-making, sparkling

paradox, and appropriate illustration could constitute eloquence. But it had one terrible defect — the utterance of the speaker was so imperfect that until our ears got accustomed to the peculiarities of his articulation, even those of us who were in the best places for hearing could not fully understand what he was saying; and those who were less favourably placed found it hard to understand him at all.

After the speech was over a reporter for one of the daily papers consulted me on what would naturally seem to him a very important point. He asked me if I could tell him why Sir Edward had quoted so often from Joe Miller, and what were the quotations he had introduced. I assured him that to the best of my belief the quotations were not from Joe Miller but from John Mill, and I did all I could to help him to the exact passages which the orator had cited as authority in support of his propositions.

The other story brings us to a period after Mill's death. As everyone knows, Mill is buried just outside Avignon, where his wife was laid in earth before him, and where for a long time he had been accustomed to spend most of his winters. I happened to be staying at Avignon once with my son and daughter, several years after Mill's death, and we naturally paid many a visit to the grave of the great thinker and his wife. At the hotel we chanced to make the acquaintance of an agreeable young Englishman whom I shall take leave to disguise under the familiar name of Brown. Mr. Brown went about the historic places of Avignon with us, and made himself a very pleasant companion, and he accompanied us to Mill's grave. That particular visit seemed to puzzle him a little; and when he found that we were actually going there again, he said to my

daughter in a timid hesitating way, as of one anxious to respect our feelings: 'This gentleman, this Mr. Mill, I suppose was a very near relation of yours.' My daughter replied that he was no relation whatever, but was a man whom we greatly admired. He dropped the subject for a moment, but he returned to it tentatively after a time, evidently anxious at once to show his sympathy and to add to his stock of information. 'This gentleman, this Mr. Mill,' he said — 'I suppose he was a very nice man.' It was explained to him that that was not exactly the description which we should have chosen as an exhaustive summary of Mr. Mill's qualities, and that he was in fact a very great man. Our friend received this statement of our views with sympathetic deference. 'I am sorry to say,' he said, 'that I never heard of this gentleman, this Mr. Mill, before; may I ask what did he do?' Then we told him as well as we could, and he listened with the modest air of one who was quite willing to learn and disposed to accept, as far as he could, our estimate of any person in whom we happened to feel some particular interest.

My friend Mr. John Morley, in a speech which he made not very long after Mill's death, paid a noble tribute to the memory of his lost teacher and friend. 'A wiser and more virtuous man,' he said, 'I have never known and never hope to know.' I venture to adopt Mr. Morley's words as the best representation I could possibly find of my own judgment and my own feelings with regard to John Stuart Mill — a wiser and more virtuous man I have never known and do not expect to know; and yet I have had the good fortune to know many wise and virtuous men. I never knew any man of really great intellect who carried less of the ordinary ways of greatness about him. There was an

added charm in the very shyness of his manner when one remembered how strong he could be and how fearless he could be, if the occasion called for a display of fortitude and courage. I felt a great admiration for Lord Salisbury, Lord Cranborne as he then was, when he loudly rebuked a number of his Tory followers in the House of Commons who were rudely interrupting Mill's first attempt to address that House. Lord Salisbury signalled to them with angry gesture and angry cries to cease their senseless interruptions, and turning to some friend who sat behind on a near bench he called out, 'Ask them if they know who John Stuart Mill is.' I have never been one of Lord Salisbury's followers on any great public question whatever, so far as I can recollect, but I can never think of his generous anger on that occasion without recognising his position as a man of education, a man of intellect, and a chivalrous gentleman.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EXILE-WORLD OF LONDON

In the years from 1860 to 1868 I had many and peculiar opportunities of becoming acquainted with that sort of existence which I called in an essay published more than a quarter of a century ago in New York, 'The Exile-World of London.' Many of the denizens of that exile-world of London made their way to the 'Morning Star' offices to give their views on this or that foreign crisis, to ask a hearing for their grievances, to publish complaints against their home Governments, or it might be against the Government of England. Thus I came to know many men who had led lives of thrilling interest, and some of whose names belong to history. Others there were who did not come to any newspaper office with grievances or complaints, but whom I happened to know more or less intimately in their private lives, and for some of whom I had and have the highest respect and admiration. At that time the foreign exiles of a certain class almost all lived in or haunted the regions of Leicester Square. There was no Alhambra in Leicester Square then, and the bright pretty garden which now exists was represented by a muddy swamp and a riderless statue of a horse, the rider of which had long since fallen off his steed, and then lay on the earth, no one paying him any particular attention.

But Leicester Square was only the home of the rank and file, the followers and the understrappers of Continental conspiracy. The exiles whom people in London cared most to see did not find their home in the streets and alleys and courts that ran off Leicester Square. The exiles who have made part of history lived in Kensington, in Brompton, in Hampstead, in the Regent's Park, and a select few had their abodes in Mayfair. Anyone may see to this day a plaque let into a house in King Street, St. James's, to record the fact that in that building once lived as an exile the Prince Louis Napoleon who was afterwards, for some twenty showy resplendent years, Emperor of the French. I knew the house very well at a later period; but the residence there of Louis Napoleon was before my time in London. The late Earl of Mayo, then Lord Naas, lived there for a while; and it was through a slight acquaintance with him that I came to know of the house in King Street. When I saw Louis Napoleon in London he was at the zenith of his career, and was the central figure of more than one great state ceremonial and piece of public pageantry.

One exile whom I knew intimately for years was the late Louis Blanc, who, after the Revolution which made Louis Napoleon President of the French Republic, found a home and a shelter in England. He lived in a small house in the St. John's Wood region; and he worked for his living. He wrote books and essays and gave popular lectures. Louis Blanc never during his long stay in England took any part in foreign conspiracies. He interpreted with a singularly scrupulous integrity the loyal duty which he owed to the people who had given him shelter. He made it the rule of his life to have nothing to do with any cabals or plots which might involve England in trouble with any of her Con-

tinental neighbours. Between Louis Blanc and myself something like a friendship sprang up. He was a man of liberal reading, a student but not exactly a scholar, who had a thorough appreciation of many literatures. I do not think I have ever known a foreigner who had a better appreciation of the great masters of English literature. He was a friend of Thackeray and of many other distinguished English literary men. Louis Blanc was one of the smallest public men I have ever seen: he was shorter even than Lord John Russell, who afterwards became Earl Russell. Louis Blanc had a striking face, the face of an Italian rather than a Frenchman; and he was indeed a Corsican by birth. He had deep, dark, lustrous eyes, which gave infinite variety of expression to every word he spoke. He had a graceful presence — if we make allowance for his want of stature — and small, delicate, mobile hands. His voice was strong, clear, sweet, and thrilling: to listen to him as he spoke, one could easily understand how he carried great masses of the Parisian populace with him, and how he held the Representative Assembly spellbound in the brief days of his power as a great political leader. He gave a series of lectures in London public halls on the personages of certain epochs of French history; and he delivered the lectures in perfect English, with only just enough of southern and foreign accent to lend a new and curious charm to his style. There was dramatic force in his delivery of any emphatic passage, which reminded me in a certain sense of some of Charles Dickens's effects as a reader. I remember in especial the close of one lecture in which he was telling his audience about some of the wits and satirists and cynics who flourished in Parisian society before the French Revolution, and made a jest of everything, until at last

the crisis came — and when he had brought his discourse to this point, Louis Blanc suddenly made a deliberate pause for a moment, and looking fixedly around his audience, finished his lecture with the slowly spoken emphatic words 'Then for a time laughing went out of fashion.' I have not often found a dramatic effect wrought out with greater ease and greater success.

Louis Blanc and I used to have long talks together about French poetry and poets. I remember that he found serious fault with me for not, as he said, properly appreciating Victor Hugo. I think at the time my mind had not expanded to a thorough understanding of Victor Hugo: I saw his grotesqueness, his exaggerations, his paradoxes more clearly than I did his genuine artistic capacity — certainly I came afterwards to form a different estimate of him from that which I used to maintain when I had the audacity to argue on the subject with Louis Blanc. I used to believe then that Béranger was destined to be remembered through all time as the balladist of his epoch, and over those opinions of mine Louis Blanc shook a doubting head. He did not want to disparage Béranger; but he did not believe that his poems had taken an enduring grip of the mind and heart of France; and here again I suppose time has settled that Louis Blanc was in the right. Louis Blanc lived at one period a great deal in Brighton. He fell in love with Brighton. 'People say,' he once remarked to me, 'that it is only London by the sea; but what could anyone desire better to have than a London by the sea?' After the fall of the Empire he went back to Paris, and occupied a flat in the Rue de Rivoli, nearly opposite the tower of Saint Jacques. I saw a good deal of him there at one time. He was then a member of the Representative Assembly which used to hold its

sittings at Versailles; and I accompanied him to many of those sittings; and he always found for me a good place from which to hear the debates. Gambetta was then in the prime of his eloquence and his popularity; and Jules Simon was a conspicuous figure in debate. I knew Louis Blanc's brother, Charles Blanc, who held the post of Director of the Fine Arts under the Republic. Everyone remembers how the strange story of these two brothers, and of the manner in which the one in Paris was mysteriously impressed with a sense of the other's danger in Corsica, supplied the central idea of the well-known melodrama, 'The Corsican Brothers.' After those visits to Paris of which I have just spoken, I never saw Louis Blanc again. I always account it one of the privileges of my life to have known him, and I shall not forget his genial presence, his sympathetic nature, and the varied charms of his intercourse and his conversation.

I may introduce here the last letter I received from Louis Blanc. It relates to the old subject of pleasant controversy — the merits of Victor Hugo and Béranger.

'Paris, 96 Rue de Rivoli, Jan. 27, 1874.

'My dear McCarthy, — Excuse my not having thanked you sooner for kindly sending me your most interesting book. The fact is I have so much business on my hands that it is a marvel when I find time to read a book of literature. Now I had made up my mind not to write to you before being acquainted with your work.

'It contains a great deal which I like and admire and the points on which I do not agree with you are very few indeed.

'Your appreciation of Voltaire I take to be excellent.

But I cannot help thinking that you have a little overrated Béranger's poetical genius. Some of his ballads are no doubt "exquisite curiosities of art;" but he was, according to my opinion, somewhat deficient in what the French call "le souffle." As for the use he made of his powers, there is much in it which the French nation has good reason to lament. I wish you had not omitted to say that the recent disasters of France are partly traceable to that kind of hero-worship which has been nursed by no other writer so sedulously as by him. No other did more towards paving the way to the humiliating and ruinous despotism of Napoleon the Third. The deification of Napoleon the First was, of course, the mistake of Béranger's mind, not of his heart; but the consequences were not the less fatal.

'Your sense of justice, high-minded impartiality, and total freedom from anything like national prejudice, are strongly shown in the comparison you draw between Shakespeare's "Jeanne d'Arc" and Schiller's. That Schiller deserves the enthusiastic praise you bestow upon him, is absolutely undeniable; however, I must candidly confess that I do not think he was right in setting his face against the French Revolution, after having come forward as one of its most ardent supporters. True, this change in his feelings was brought about by the excesses which a man of his stamp was naturally expected to reprobate; but it would have been worthy of his high intellect not to fall into the vulgar error of seeing nothing in the French Revolution beyond the evils consequent upon a struggle altogether unprecedented and unequalled.

'Your remarks on Victor Hugo's theory are very suggestive; and I read the pages that relate to him with intense interest, although my opinion concerning

his works, namely "Les Misérables," rather differs from yours. It appears to me that the judgment you pass upon that wonderful book is too severe. Much could be said, if I mistake not, in favour of unfettering art. Its domain would be narrowed without any corresponding advantages if it were not allowed to picture such creatures as Fantine, for example. Is Fantine's picture in Victor Hugo more horrible than that of Goneril, Regan, or Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare? But these are questions far too important to be discussed in a letter. I must therefore stop here, and content myself with thanking you cordially for both the pleasure and profit I have derived from the perusal of your most valuable book.

'My wife, who read it also with great delight, wishes to be kindly remembered to you and Mrs. McCarthy.

'With our united regards to you all, I remain,

'Ever yours, LOUIS BLANC.'

I do not know whether it seems quite reasonable to include Garibaldi's triumphant reception in London as amongst the events belonging to the exile-world. Still, as the visit came in the days when I had best opportunity of becoming acquainted with famous Continental exiles, I think I may fairly include it in this chapter. Nobody who knew London at the time of Garibaldi's visit is likely to forget the event. No foreigner in my time ever had so splendid a reception. When Kossuth came to London some years before, he was indeed met with demonstrations of welcome which crowded every street as his triumphal procession passed along. He was received by the great dignitaries of the City, and he held vast public meetings and enthralled them by his picturesque and stately presence

and by his extraordinary eloquence. He had a noble voice ; and he talked a kind of thrilling English, compounded for the most part of the language used in the English Bible and in Shakespeare: a style that seemed to lift the listener into a higher atmosphere than that of the ordinary London life. But Society, as it is called, took little or no account of Kossuth. The leaders of political parties on both sides were disposed to fight shy of him, if I may use that colloquial expression, and were unwilling to give any offence to the Austrian Government; and Lord Palmerston in particular was determined not to commit himself by any outward marks of homage to the Hungarian exile. But with Garibaldi things were quite different. The leaders of Society rushed at him, the chief members of both political parties competed with each other for the honour of entertaining him. The cause of Italy was just then very popular in London; and the Pope was very unpopular. Garibaldi was welcomed in one coterie as the man who had led the thousand of Marsala to the expulsion of the Bourbon king from Naples; and by another coterie as the man who, in the name of United Italy, had invaded the dominions of the Pope. Only the Irish and the Catholics generally held aloof from him; and it need hardly be said that the Irish did not count for very much in London Society. Dukes and marquises and prelates, princesses, duchesses and countesses, bankers and millionaires, popular leaders and popular preachers, vied with each other for the honour of entertaining him ; and his particular friends did not allow him to stay long enough in the country to wear his welcome out. I made the acquaintance of Garibaldi when he was staying for a few days at the country house in the Isle of Wight of the late Mr. Seeley, who was then one of

the members for Nottingham. I should say that I came to be invited to Mr. Seeley's house, not because I was a friend of Garibaldi or in any way associated with Garibaldi's cause, but because I was foreign editor of the 'Morning Star,' and was anxious to give a description of the whole gathering which should not be merely a narrative of a professional correspondent. Garibaldi arrived in England on April 3, 1864, and went next day with Mr. Seeley to the Isle of Wight. There was naturally a great gathering to receive him, including many men of high distinction in the world of reformers and politicians. The late Earl of Shaftesbury was there, and Mr. Evelyn Ashley and Mr. Grant Duff (now Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant Duff), and a number of other well-known men; and on my way to the Isle of Wight I met the famous Russian exile, Alexander Herzen, who was returning, after paying a hasty visit of homage to the former Dictator of Sicily. Herzen, I may say in passing, had long been an exile in London, where he edited a Russian revolutionary journal; and he was one of the brightest and wittiest men, one of the most sparkling talkers I have ever known. Tennyson came out of his habitual seclusion to welcome Garibaldi — that was the first time I ever saw the late Poet Laureate — and planted a tree in honour of the occasion. My first glimpse of Garibaldi introduced me to a very striking and picturesque figure. Everybody knows Garibaldi's face from portraits and statues and statuettes. He wore the famous red shirt, and over it he had thrown a loose white mantle of some silken, soft substance, which he draped about him with a careless grace, and altogether he presented an appearance and a get-up as oddly out of keeping with an assembly of respectably dressed and prosaic Englishmen as the

mind can well imagine. His appearance was undoubtedly theatric, or indeed melodramatic, but he wore his picturesque costume with a simple and natural ease which seemed to make it becoming and actually unpretentious. No doubt during his South American life he had acquired a certain love for striking colours and picturesque garments; and he seemed at the first glance as if he ought to have figured in an English drawing-room somewhere about the time when 'Oh, give me but my Arab steed' was still a popular song among young ladies. A flippant and unromantic member of the company observed to me that Garibaldi made up just the sort of figure one would expect to see as an illustration on the front of a sheet of music. Yet there was a manliness and a simplicity about Garibaldi's manner and talk which soon reconciled us to the white mantle and the scarlet shirt, and made us feel as much at home in his company as if he were disfigured by the swallow-tailed black coat and the white tie which constitute the evening uniform of modern civilisation. He talked very freely to everybody, speaking generally in French, which suited better the level of the company than the Italian on which few of us had the skill or the courage to venture. He spoke English correctly enough — he had been for some time a resident on Staten Island, in New York Harbour — and he was perfectly willing to speak English, but many of us who did not attempt Italian thought it would be unbecoming of the occasion if we did not at least address the great soldier in French. He spoke English with a very foreign and peculiar accent; and he occasionally used some expressions which had in them a savour of his residence in the United States. For instance, he talked of some legislative measure or other being 'rushed' through a

parliamentary assembly, and the phrase, familiar enough to us all at present, was then quite new to me at least. He said once, with a quiet smile, that in all his various wanderings he had had one experience whenever he came into the company of Englishmen. 'Wherever,' he said, 'you meet three or four Englishmen in whatever climate, you will always see three or four glasses of sherry,' and he pronounced the word sherry in a way which I can only suggest by printing it thus — kherry. He talked with great frankness and much intelligence about political affairs on the Continent. He described Mr. Gladstone as the 'precursor' of Italian liberty, and spoke of the effect on the conscience of Europe which had been produced by Mr. Gladstone's famous letters from Naples.

Just at that time there was a great deal of talk going on in England and abroad about the absurd charges made against the late Sir James Stansfeld as a patron of assassination, because he was a friend of Mazzini, and had found for Mazzini a home in London. Some of us asked Garibaldi whether he thought there was any truth in the charges made against certain young Italians of conspiring to assassinate the Emperor of the French. Garibaldi answered in a very quiet and straightforward manner. After repudiating utterly any sympathy with such crime on the part of either Mazzini or himself, he went on to say that an inevitable misfortune accompanying every popular attempt at revolution was found in the fact that a certain set of young and morbid enthusiasts were always sure to think that a national cause could be served by the removal of the tyrant; and he pointed out that when such attempts were made it was not always easy to discover how far the attempted crimes were the spontaneous work of the

young men themselves, and how far they were the work of police agents who got at notorious young fanatics and urged them on to make such attempts in the hope that the national cause might be thereby discredited in the mind of all civilised peoples. Then he went on to point out that from whatever source those crimes may come, they ought to be considered as surgeons would consider certain symptoms in the human body as evidences of deranged and diseased condition which called for a general application of remedial measures. He pointed to the fact that in such a country as England or as America political assassinations are of the rarest occurrence, and that was, he said, not because Englishmen and Americans are naturally so much better than Frenchmen or Italians or Russians, but because there is no perpetual political grievance pervading the whole system like a corroding ulcer.

I had some talk alone with Garibaldi afterwards — the next day, I think it was — and he knew of my nationality, and he expressed to me his great regret that Irishmen in general regarded him with such feelings of hostility. 'They think,' he said, 'that I am an enemy of the Pope, but they do not always remember that I hurried home from South America to fight for the Pope when we all believed that he was about to head the national movement to deliver Italy from the Austrians and the Bourbons.' He told me he had had many good friends and comrades among Irishmen both in North and South America, and that he always had an admiration for the Irish race, and that he believed they had been dealt hardly with during many generations. I had a long and most interesting talk with him as we walked up and down under the vines in Mr. Seeley's conservatory, and I found in him an intelligence — I

may say a certain intellectuality — which I had not quite expected to find. Many of his expressions had a curious half-poetic touch about them, and I began to understand the enthusiasm which he personally inspired among those who came near him and were his friends — something quite apart, I mean, from the natural enthusiasm which his soldierly daring inspired among his comrades in arms. We parted with expressions of a hope to meet again in London; but by the time Garibaldi got to London he found himself a captive in the hands of Society, and, though I did meet him more than once, I had no chance of any further talk with him. I came up from the Isle of Wight in the company of Mr. Grant Duff and two or three others; and Mr. Grant Duff had much to tell us about his recent observation of the treatment of Polish prisoners in Russian gaols. His observations were to me quite new and full of interest. They were in striking contrast with almost all that I had read about the barbarities of the Russian prison system; and Mr. Grant Duff's accounts became the subject of many long discussions inside and outside the House of Commons. Garibaldi meanwhile came on to London, and he was domiciled in the house of the Duke of Sutherland. Then it was that the attentions of Society began to pour in upon him. He was alike the hero of the drawing-rooms, of the streets, and of the mob; the West End vied with the City in doing homage to him; vast numbers of ladies put on the red shirt in order to do him especial honour. 'Welcoming maidens in scarlet chemise,' wrote one of 'Punch's' poets on the occasion. His name underwent some varieties of pronunciation. According to another poet of 'Punch' it was 'Gari*bal*di when duchesses gave him a *bal;* Garibawldi whenever

it 's bawled through the City.' In one instance, however, his name was still more perversely misrendered. Garibaldi was very quick and graceful in his notice of any special recognition even when the largest crowds followed his progress through the Strand or the City. On one occasion a noisy admirer of his in the Strand was heard to testify after his own fashion to the Italian patriot's spirit of concession. 'We could not see him for the crowd,' thus said the narrator, 'so I just halloaed out to him, "Stand up, Jaribawldi!" and blowed if Jaribawldi did n't stand up in the carriage to let us see him.'

Garibaldi made his headquarters during his stay in London at Stafford House. For about ten days the enthusiasm kept growing and growing. Apparently the Tories had been at first inclined to let the Liberals have the hero all to themselves; but as the popular excitement grew, the Tories probably began to think it prudent, especially as a general election was not far off, to enter wholesale into the spirit of the thing, and they therefore made themselves rivals with the Liberals in their invitations to Garibaldi. Sometimes the succession of festivities was rather too much for the worn-out old soldier and sailor. I remember attending a great 'at home,' given at a very fashionable West End house, where the majority of the company were doomed to a sad disappointment. Garibaldi had been dining with some leader of politics and fashion, and felt very tired by the time he got to the scene of the later festivity. As usual at a London crush very few of the company arrived at the hour notified on the card of invitation, and the hero could not stand any more waiting. He went home and went to bed; and the great majority of the evening's crowd arrived only in time to learn that

the scarlet shirt was not to be seen that night. There was a vast popular gathering in his honour at the Crystal Palace on April 16, where he was presented by the Italian Association in London with a sword of honour. Some thirty thousand people were present; and I have never looked upon a scene of greater popular excitement. All the ladies wore the Italian colours, red, white, and green, and many of them were literally draped in costumes displaying these colours only. The visit, however, came to a sudden and what might be called a mysterious termination. Perhaps the political leaders on both sides of the field began to think that the thing was being carried rather too far, and that the Governments of France and Austria at least might take offence at the marked demonstrations of welcome given to the representative of Italian National Revolution. Perhaps it was feared that the demonstrations might lead to some sort of disturbance in London, although the whole populace, with the exception of the Irish alone, were wild in their worship of Garibaldi. However that may be, it is certain that representations were made to those who immediately surrounded Garibaldi, and made, too, by some of the political leaders most favourable to the Italian cause, to the effect that Garibaldi had been long enough in London and might begin to think of returning to his Italian home. Garibaldi himself, I have good reason to believe, was quite tired of the whole business, and he was only too anxious to be out of the crowd. The leaders of the London working men made strong remonstrance against the mysterious movement which had for its object to hurry Garibaldi out of the metropolis; and there were deputations appointed to wait on leading Liberal statesmen and to argue against the seeming want of hospitality. The

remonstrances and arguments, however, proved to be of no avail; and the Duke of Sutherland took Garibaldi on board his yacht and conveyed him back to Caprera. During the whole time of his visit such Englishmen as Cobden and Bright kept aloof from any part in the popular demonstrations. These men and most of their followers were unwilling to mix themselves up with the cause of any foreign revolution, and acted upon the assumption that Englishmen would find work enough to do at home if they were anxious to concern themselves in the task of political emancipation. Bright indeed pointed out in a speech not long afterwards that if Englishmen would only turn out in such numbers to demonstrate their desire for political reform as they had shown when they turned out to do honour to 'an illustrious Italian,' they would compel the House of Parliament to listen to their demands for an extension of the suffrage. Garibaldi, then, left London and never returned there.

Had he returned he would have had many to welcome him and to admire him indeed; but he would have had no crowds at the Crystal Palace and few invitations from Ministers of the Crown and duchesses. I can remember the time when it was hardly possible to find any hall in England large enough to contain half the crowd who desired to listen to the eloquence of Kossuth, and I can also remember the time, not very much later, when an address from Kossuth could not draw together numbers enough to occupy more than half of a hall of very moderate dimensions. There has always seemed to me something a little wanton, I might almost say unmerciful, about the sudden burst of wild enthusiasm which sometimes greets a leader of foreign revolution when he comes to London, and collapses as soon

as the novelty of the visit has worn off. I have spoken of this as wanton and unmerciful because it has more than once inspired the hero of such a welcome with the futile hope that his cause is likely to receive some substantial help at the hands of England. No harm was done in the case of Garibaldi; he did not expect any such help; and all the events that happened after his coming to London, from the war between Austria and Prussia, to the war between Prussia and France, worked on the side of Italian unity. But I know of some instances in which Italians and other strangers have been misled by these outbursts of evanescent enthusiasm on the part of Englishmen. I am well convinced, for instance, that Felice Orsini, the Italian revolutionist, when he escaped from his Austrian prison and came to this country, was utterly misled by the demonstrations of welcome which received him, and was for a time filled with the belief that the English Government could be prevailed upon by popular pressure to do something towards helping his national cause. I know that when he was in Liverpool some outspoken resolute and conscientious Liberals of that city did their best, and with the best motive, to undeceive him and to make him understand that, however he might be welcomed at public meetings as one who had escaped from an Austrian dungeon, there was not the slightest chance that any English Government could be prevailed upon to identify itself practically with the cause of his people. Orsini, I know, did not believe in the warning at first, and was bitterly disappointed. I have often wondered whether that disappointment may not have had something to do with the desperation of the purpose which afterwards took possession of Orsini and drove him to the crime which all the world denounced. That crime,

the attempted assassination of the Emperor of the French, and the bloodshed which accompanied that abortive attempt, were then and after set down as having had something to do with frightening Louis Napoleon into adopting the cause of Italy and making war upon Austria. The policy of Louis Napoleon, as we all came to know at a later date, was arranged before Orsini had thought of his wild and guilty attempt. Count Cavour was the man who, after the Congress of Paris which closed the Crimean war, prevailed upon Louis Napoleon to go in for the Italian cause, mainly by assuring him that if he did not undertake the work, England would undertake it on her own account. Nobody knew better than Count Cavour that England would do nothing of the kind; but he had impressed upon the then Lord Clarendon the fact that it would be a great thing for England to anticipate Louis Napoleon in the business; and Lord Clarendon believing his shrewd friend to be a mere dreamer of dreams, allowed Cavour to talk on and said nothing. Cavour chose to interpret his silence as a statesmanlike way of giving consent, and said as much to Louis Napoleon; Louis Napoleon thought he had better go in for the enterprise than leave it to England; and so the Austrians were driven out of Lombardy. I have wandered away from my immediate purpose into this little dissertation; but my strong impression is that the disappointment felt by Orsini from the results of his visit to England did much to drive him on the wild and desperate enterprise which doomed him to death and his memory to odium. Orsini was worthy of a better fate. When I made his acquaintance I was much taken, as most other people who met him were, by the simplicity, sweetness, and soldierlike straightforwardness of his demeanour. He delivered

some lectures in London, Manchester, Liverpool, and other large cities, chiefly on his imprisonment and on his escape from prison, and although he had but a moderate success as a lecturer — a success of curiosity more even than of sentiment — he was surrounded everywhere by well-meaning and sympathising English admirers, the extent of whose influence, and the practical value of whose sympathy, he did not at first quite understand. I think from something I heard him say once that Mazzini had endeavoured to enlighten him as to the true state of affairs in England, and the real value of the kind of sympathy which London is so ready to offer to any new and interesting exile from the Continent. I do not believe that Mazzini's advice had much influence over him. Indeed, at the time I saw him he appeared to have little respect for Mazzini; and on one occasion he spoke to me with something like contempt of Mazzini as of one who would incite others into danger which he was not willing to share himself. I never knew Mazzini, and have no means of judging if Orsini's opinion was well founded or not; but it certainly would have been better for Orsini if he had accepted or acted on the cautious advice which he told me himself Mazzini had given him with regard to his English visit. I have always thought that the readiness of the many people in England to rush at any revolutionist from the Continent and become effusive and rapturous about himself and his cause, was only too often a very cruel kindness. The last of the Polish insurrections was encouraged and assisted a good deal by many sincere and well-meaning Englishmen who did not consider carefully enough how terrible was the risk of every such enterprise, and how slight and faint were its possibilities of success. 'I think,' said John Bright to me

one day, 'that every Englishman who helped to encourage those poor Poles and give them hope of English help, has Polish blood upon his hands.' The words were spoken with characteristic earnestness and strength — they may have been a little too strong, but there was some stern truth in them.

I came into a somewhat close acquaintanceship with the late General Prim during his short exile in London, while he was preparing for the enterprise which he afterwards carried to success in Spain, the enterprise which pushed for a time the efforts of the Carlist dynasty out of the way. General Prim has been lately introduced into fiction as a leading figure in the novel 'A School for Saints,' by my friend the lady whose adopted name in literature is John Oliver Hobbes. The author has described Prim's personal appearance very well, although the years she has lived are not long enough to have allowed her any opportunity of personally knowing him. I have the advantage of her in that respect at all events; for I knew him well, and when I was editor of the 'Morning Star' he used to come to see me very often — almost every day, for some time. I formed a very high estimate of his abilities, his character, his resolve, his moderation, and his intellectual capacity. He was a man of slender but sinewy frame, not above the middle height, with keen dark eyes which sent forth an expressive flash to emphasise any sentence or word to which he desired to give any special significance. He had been a brilliant soldier and had won a reputation that spread all over the world by his successful campaigns in North Africa. He always talked with the greatest frankness about his designs, his plans, and his purposes. I was at first inclined to be a little sceptical as to his chances of success, not because I had any

particular knowledge of the subject, but because he seemed to me to be mapping out his political and revolutionary campaign all too coolly and methodically — too much after the fashion of a stage manager describing in advance the arrangements of his next theatrical enterprise. Not that there was anything theatric in his manner — on the contrary, he talked the whole subject over as if it were some mere matter of practical business; but he seemed to have arranged everything so completely in his own mind, he was so ready to meet every suggestion of difficulty by showing that he had thought all that fully out, and was prepared in advance to deal with it, that to an ordinary listener like myself there seemed something of impossibility about an enterprise so mechanically fitted in advance for success. I remember very well that he spoke with much generosity about the absence of intense hatred towards political adversaries amongst all classes of his countrymen. This was a new view of the subject to me who had adopted without much mental inquiry the conventional ideas of the Spaniard as a creature filled with implacable hate when he fancied he had any reason to hate at all. Prim, on the contrary, insisted that the Spaniards were much more forgiving towards their political opponents than were Frenchmen, or even Englishmen in general. Once a man was down in Spain, he said, 'His worst enemies were ready to make allowance for him and forgive him.' One exception, however, he distinctly made, and the exception he contended only proved the rule in this case, for the exception had reference to the late Marshal Narvaez, who, he declared, had made himself so much hated by his enemies that even his death did not obtain from them their pity and their pardon. Prim was an admirable talker; he spoke in French as I

was not able to converse with him in Spanish; and we had many long talks on different subjects. He was anxious for information on all manner of questions connected with English politics and political life; and he was naturally much interested in England's military organisation. The expedition into Abyssinia which ended in the capture of Magdala and the death of King Theodore had recently taken place, and many of us were rather inclined to deprecate its value as a triumph of British arms, seeing that the enemy were able to make such a poor resistance and that there was hardly any serious fighting. I well remember, however, that Prim took a totally different view and declared with emphasis that he should have been only too proud to have organised such an expedition and carried it to such a complete success. He pointed out with great effect the perplexity and the magnitude of the difficulties which nature had put in the way of the enterprise, the mountains to be got over, the ravines to be penetrated, the climate which had to be endured, the long, minute, and careful preparations which had to be made in advance for every step of the way, the difficulties of movement, the difficulties of commissariat, the manner in which at every mile of the road the General had to be in readiness for a possible attack at any moment, the manner in which the whole work had been done up to time, and the complete success achieved at the smallest possible sacrifice of life. Prim's own personal experiences in North Africa had given him ample opportunity of studying such campaigning enterprises; and there was something of a positively artistic feeling in the admiration which he expressed for the conduct of the British commander. He reminded me strongly of some great painter or sculptor who glows with generous en-

thusiasm over the work of another painter or sculptor, and is especially anxious to point out to the unenlightened observer the peculiar difficulties which that particular subject had put in the artist's way, and the complete triumph with which he had surmounted them all and brought his task to a perfect consummation. Prim lived a very quiet life in London, and his chief enjoyment appeared to be to spend an evening at the Opera. He never made any appeal to the general public, or sought for the sympathy of the crowd which so many another foreign exile has been eager to obtain. He was making his preparations and waiting for his time, which time came. A curious and almost comic incident in my life is associated with the name of General Prim. In the September of the year when I had the pleasure of making his acquaintance I had arranged to pay my first visit to the United States. Prim and I had a friendly leavetaking, and we parted one Thursday towards the middle of the month. I was to sail for New York on the Saturday following. On the Friday I came down somewhat late to the office of the 'Morning Star,' and I found that Prim had called, had left a card for me, and said that he should probably return that evening. I assumed that he had forgotten something which he had meant to say, and I expected to see him all that night, but he did not come. I put his card into my pocket-book where I kept my own cards, and next day I sailed for New York. One of the first visits I paid after my arrival in New York was to the offices of a merchant to whom I had sent in advance a letter of introduction from my friend the late Cyrus W. Field, accompanied by a few lines of my own saying that I would call upon him soon after my arriving in the city. I went to his offices, was told that he was in, and sent

in, as I supposed, my card. Now let it be borne in mind that about this time all the world was looking out for Prim's expected enterprise in Spain. Presently the gentleman to whom I had sent Mr. Field's letter of introduction came rushing from his private room into the outer office where I was standing. He looked eagerly around him in every direction. One of his clerks came and whispered something to him and pointed to me. He came towards me, looking somewhat surprised I thought, and scanning my countenance rather doubtfully, he asked in hesitating voice, 'Have I the honour of speaking to Marshal Prim?' He held out to me at the same time a card which at once explained the situation. I had in mistake sent in to him not my own card, but the card of Marshal Prim, emblazoned with his full titles and military designation, 'El General Prim, Conde de Reus, Marques de Castillejos,' and his coronet. The incident was embarrassing for the moment; but only for the moment. The explanation soon set everything right, and I had even the satisfaction of knowing that my new friend was not disappointed but was actually gratified at finding that it was not Marshal Prim who was awaiting him in his Broadway offices. He was, it turned out, somewhat of a sympathiser with Marshal Prim's new projects, and when he received the card was stricken with a momentary alarm under the impression that the enterprise had suddenly collapsed and that Prim was an exile in America. I never saw Prim after that time. His death followed all too soon. The authoress of 'The School for Saints' seems to ascribe to some of Prim's followers a sympathy with plots to remove dangerous enemies out of the way by the simple method of assassination. It is, however, a fact that Prim himself was

the only victim to the hand of the assassin on either side of the great controversy. Prim's project was for his immediate purpose a success: he unmade the Queen whom he desired to push from the throne; and made, for the time at least, the King whom he desired to put there. Nothing impressed me more in the conversations I had with him than the absolute precision of his purposes and his plans. In this peculiarity, uncommon certainly among the makers of revolutions, he seemed to me in curious contrast with another exile whom I came to know a great many years after — the late General Boulanger. I met General Boulanger several times while he was an exile here in London and keeping up a genial state at his house in Portland Place. The first time I met Boulanger was at a dinner party given in the House of Commons, which had only four guests, of whom the General was one. I had therefore a good opportunity of hearing him talk, and he seemed to be very frank in the exposition of his immediate purposes. We had many meetings after that, and he presented me with a copy of his book on the German invasion of France, which I shall always keep with a melancholy interest. But I may say at once that I never could quite understand General Boulanger's plan of campaign. There seemed always a certain dreaminess or haziness about his way of describing his various projects. Of course I did not expect that he was going to make known to me or to any other casual acquaintance exactly what he wanted to do or how he proposed to set about doing it. But the impression which somehow he always left on me was that he had no very clear and settled ideas of his own. The picture he has left on my mind and my memory is that of a dreamer rather than of a worker. He came thus into a clearly cut contrast

with the impression I had formed of Marshal Prim: one might approve of Prim's purposes or disapprove of them; one might think them hopeful or hopeless, possible or impossible; but there was left no room for a doubt that the man himself knew precisely what he meant to do, and had arranged in advance every movement which he believed likely to lead to the success of his enterprise. In both the men alike there was a certain vein of half-poetic enthusiasm; but curiously enough the Frenchman seemed to be the born dreamer, and the Spaniard the born worker.

I have jumped over the space of some twenty years for the sake of thus bringing into comparison and contrast these two remarkable men, Prim and Boulanger. I now turn back to the exile-world of London as I had come to know it about the time of my intercourse with Marshal Prim. I had an acquaintance extending over many years with the German exile and poet Ferdinand Freiligrath. Some years before I came to settle in London I had become enchanted with the poems of Freiligrath. At that time I was living in Liverpool, a very young man, and I knew nothing of Freiligrath beyond the fact that he was the exile of some German popular cause or other, and that he was a poet. His poems impressed me so much that I set myself to work at a metrical translation of them, and I toiled away at this task with all the enthusiasm of a young man who has come upon a new poet. I did not know then even where Freiligrath was living; and it was only during a short visit to London, when I went to a publishing house with the hope of getting my translations brought before the world, that I discovered Freiligrath's London address. I wrote to Freiligrath from Liverpool and received a kindly and encouraging reply. Not very

much came, at the time, of my effort at publication. I did not know quite as much then about literary work as I have learnt since; and I was for the time under the fond impression that a publishing house could be found ready to undertake at its own risk the issue of a volume of translations from a German poet by a translator whose name up to that hour had never appeared in print. Hardly anything was known in England just then of the poems of Freiligrath. Some years later, when I had become settled in London, the late George Henry Lewes, a profound German scholar, and author of the 'Life of Goethe,' which was accepted even by Germans, told me that not only had he never read a poem of Freiligrath's, but that he had never even seen a volume of Freiligrath's poems. I believe the higher class of German scholars of this country did not profess to think much of the poetry of Freiligrath; but I was enthusiastic about it then, and I remain enthusiastic about it still. My own countryman Clarence Mangan, who had the true poet's soul if ever man had it, was filled with an intense admiration for Freiligrath, and had translated some of his poems; and I suppose it was from him that I first caught my enthusiasm. Mangan's translations, however, were very free and almost formless — at least the form was Mangan's and not Freiligrath's — Mangan caught Freiligrath's idea and attuned it to his own wild harp-strings. Anyhow, when I came to read Freiligrath for myself I grew more enthusiastic than ever, and I spent many delightful hours in trying to put him into an English translation which should preserve his form as well as his poetic conceptions. The volume of translations was never published; but many of my renderings were afterwards introduced by the poet's daughter, then Miss Kate Freiligrath, into a

complete translation of her father's poems which she published. I wrote an article on Freiligrath and his poems in the London 'Quarterly Review,' and to this I sent many of my translations. The most important fact for me in my attempt at the work of a translator was that it procured me a friendship with Freiligrath and his family which lasted until his death, and which still exists, so far as his now widowed daughter is concerned. I have the happiest memories of that friendship. The German poet and political exile was as thoroughly acquainted with English literature as any man I have ever met. His mind was steeped in Shakespeare and in those other Elizabethan dramatists about whom, in this country, we most of us know so little. He made many admirable translations from Burns, from Coleridge, and from Thomas Moore. His rendering into German of 'A man's a man for a' that' is a marvellous reproduction of the original both in spirit and in form. The original and the translation can be sung to the same air; every word of Burns is reproduced in sense and sound by the translator. Freiligrath, when I knew him first, was the manager of the National Bank of Switzerland in London. He had to become a political exile because he lived in Prussia during the worst days of modern kingly tyranny there; and although, even then, there were still judges in Berlin, and he had been acquitted in open court of one charge made against him, he found that life would be intolerable to him if he were to remain under the system where freedom of political opinion was always liable to become the subject of a Government prosecution. When his business of each day was done he lived in London the quiet life of a reader, a scholar, and a thinker. It is gratifying to know that his countrymen were not unmindful of him

or ungrateful to him all the time, and that he was free at last to return to his own land under happier conditions. He was never a conspirator; and in his exile he had nothing to do with political combinations. Like Louis Blanc, he interpreted the obligation to the country which had sheltered him as one which prevented him from embarrassing it by any course of conduct which might bring it into terms of unfriendliness with the Government of a foreign State. Many of his poems breathe a positive passion for life in the East. He had never been out of Europe, had never even been in those parts of Europe where the atmosphere of the East already begins to breathe; he had never seen Constantinople; he had never seen a palm tree growing from its kindred soil, or a camel moving across its native sand: and yet he was able to picture in his poems an African desert furrowed by the shaggy tail of the lion who has last passed across it, and to make one feel the hot breath of the air that languishes over Sahara. I remember in particular one of his poems in which he describes the toil of a caravan across the parching plains, and he puts the description into the mouth of our own Othello. In a fanciful delightful way he pictures Othello and Desdemona seated in a gondola on a Venetian canal, and Desdemona asks her Moorish lover to tell her something of the desert which he must have seen; and then Othello sets off on a description of the pilgrims across the sands and of the mirage that mocks their fatigue and their thirst, and of the manner in which life after life drops out on the red unsheltered wild. His exquisite melodious sand songs — not the sand of the desert, but the sand of the sunlit summer beach in milder climates — and his dreamy ballads of the sea, bring up to the minds and the hearts of his

readers every picture and idea that the poet could desire to create. I do not know of any writer who managed to keep a greater aloofness — if I may use the expression — from the common surroundings of his every-day life than Freiligrath did while living as an exile first in Amsterdam and then in London. I cannot better express my sense of the impression which some of Freiligrath's poems made on me than by saying that my first glimpse of the real Sahara made me think to myself, 'How like one of Freiligrath's songs!' and that once by a lonely Canadian river I asked of a companion, 'Does not this remind you of that poem of Freiligrath's about the exile in the Canadian backwoods?'

There is one class of obscure exile in London quite different from any of those I have described, whose existence greatly interested and often puzzled me. I knew a man of this class during the Schleswig-Holstein controversy which ended in the war between Denmark and the German Powers, and led in its turn to the war between Prussia and Austria. This man was a Prussian, a waif of the Berlin rising of 1848. He came to me at the 'Morning Star' office and offered to give me information for the purposes of the newspaper of all that was going on at the Conference of London — a conference of diplomatists sitting with closed doors and pledged of course to the profoundest secrecy. The conference was held because some of the great European Powers, England and France especially, were most anxious to save Denmark from the immeasurably superior force of Prussia and Austria. I gave him a chance, and he brought me every evening what professed to be a condensed account of all that had taken place at the sitting of the conference that day. For a long time nothing in particular occurred, nothing at least that

anyone acquainted with the general subject might not have easily guessed at, provided only that he could get to know the names of the diplomatists who had taken part in the discussion. At last, however, it began to be known that Louis Napoleon and Lord Palmerston had agreed upon a certain definite proposal to be made conjointly to the conference, England and France acting to the best of their power on the part of Denmark. So much we all knew, all of us at least who were acquainted with any of the leading politicians in London. One memorable evening my mysterious friend came to me and told me that I had it in my power to astonish the world next day by announcing in the 'Morning Star' that the proposal had been actually made and had been indignantly rejected — rejected by whom? By Austria, by Prussia, by Russia? No — indignantly rejected by Denmark herself, in whose interests the English and French diplomatists believed themselves to be offering the suggestion. The story seemed incredible; it seemed preposterous; but I had come somehow to have a sort of faith in my mysterious friend, and on consulting with my colleagues we determined to run the risk. The bearer of the news made only one stipulation, and that was that it must not be timidly given as a conjecture or lightly put forth as a statement made on trustworthy authority, but must be announced point-blank as a positive fact. We broke our bridges, burnt our ships, and made the positive announcement. Next day we were laughed at and our news was repudiated and denounced. That is, our news was repudiated and denounced until the House of Commons met that evening. Then Lord Palmerston rose and made a solemn statement to the House, the effect of which was that the news in the 'Morning Star' was positively and literally

correct: Denmark had repudiated her would-be protectors, and rejected the proposal meant to save her; the conference was over; there was nothing further to confer about; and the Danish war set in. The last time I received any tidings from my mysterious friend was in the spring of 1866; he came then to tell me that Prussia had resolved — at least that Bismarck had resolved to force a war with Austria. 'Stick to that statement,' he said, 'whatever anybody may say to the contrary, unless Bismarck resigns. So long as Bismarck remains in power you may keep on insisting that he means to have war with Austria.' I followed his advice, although at this time I do not believe that any English diplomatist knew what Bismarck's resolve was, and I am certain that the English House of Commons had no official hint of the German minister's intentions. The 'Morning Star' stuck to its announcement that war was certain between Austria and Prussia, and I need not say that the war soon came. I had not then, and I have not now, the least idea as to my mysterious friend's sources of information. He was living in London as a teacher of languages; he was living in obscurity; he was poor; he certainly had no diplomatic post of any kind; he certainly was not in the employment of the Prussian police, and, if he were, would not be in the least degree likely to bring news to me which might have interfered with the purposes of his employers; he did not ask for and did not get any large sums of money for his information; he declared himself to be drawn towards the 'Morning Star' because of its general sympathy with what I may call the Radical cause, or at all events the Liberal cause all over the Continent. Nothing came of it so far as he was concerned — I mean that he got no particular advancement

by it; he had not literary training enough to enable him to become a regular contributor to a London newspaper. I met him years and years afterwards, and he was still making his modest living in the old quiet way. How did he get his information? That he never would tell me and I never could guess.

Another of my mysterious acquaintances was an old, white-haired, grave, placid man who presented himself at the office of the 'Morning Star' during the early part of the French occupation of Mexico. He was a passionate Republican, an anti-Buonapartist. He had lived in Mexico and was apparently in the confidence of Juarez, then President of the Mexican Republic; and was thoroughly identified with the views and interests of the people of Mexico, although himself a Frenchman by ancestry, birth, and education. Indeed I have never met with a finer specimen of the stately old-fashioned French gentleman than this mysterious friend of republican Mexico. He might have come fresh from the courtly quarter of the old nobility in Paris, so peculiar was the grave, dignified, and somewhat melancholy grace of his whole bearing. Yet he had evidently lived long in Mexico and was indeed an ardent Republican of the red tinge, and there was something of the old *militaire* too about him which lent a certain strength to his bland and benign demeanour. He told me, I remember, among other things, that he had only met two Englishmen in London who could speak French well enough to be mistaken by anyone like himself for natives of France, and these were the late Lord Granville and my dear old friend the late Edward F. S. Pigott, formerly examiner of plays. I never knew what he was doing in London, and I had no reason to believe that he held any official position of whatever kind. His only object appeared to

be to supply accurate information to one or two London Liberal journals which appeared to him honestly inclined to take the right side of every great foreign question. His information was always accurate, his estimate of a critical situation was always justified by further knowledge and the progress of events; his predictions always came true; he looked like a poor man, indeed almost like a needy man, but he never seemed to want for money, and he neither sought nor would accept any compensation for the constant and valuable information he afforded. His knowledge of European and American politics was profound; and although he could not speak a single word of English he seemed to understand all the daily details of our English political life. He had a thorough knowledge of American politics, a rare acquirement in those days among Europeans generally; and he seemed to be in correspondence with some of the leading American statesmen. For a considerable time he was a constant visitor to me, always at night and almost always late. One night he brought me a piece of news which proved to be most important — the news that the American Government had made up its mind to give Louis Napoleon notice to quit Mexico. This he told me I might announce not as a conjecture or a speculation or a probability, but as a fact. I acted on his advice, and it soon came out to be true. Then, when the Mexican empire had nearly come to its disastrous end, he came and told me that the close was very near, and that in the event of the unfortunate Maximilian being captured it would be impossible for President Juarez to spare his life, in consequence of the proclamation which the ever unlucky Marshal Bazaine had issued proclaiming death to everyone taken in the uniform of the Mexican Republic — in other words, to

every enrolled soldier of the regular army of the country. I need hardly say that his information turned out in this instance to be too true. He did not tell me that he was at once returning to Mexico; but I presume that he did immediately return there, for that was the last I ever saw or heard of him.

During the impassioned quarrels between the Representative Chamber of Prussia and Count Bismarck, before the days when the triumph of Sadowa and the extrusion of Austria from the Germanic system had condoned the offences of the great despotic minister, I had a visit one night from a quiet, shabby-looking, snuffy old German, who seemed like a professor out of occupation and generally down upon his luck. He brought a letter of introduction to me from a very eminent German whose fame had nothing whatever to do with political life. My new friend came, he said, to develop to me a grand plan for the suppression and, indeed, the absolute removal of the Junker or feudal party in Prussia. He explained to me that his friend from whom he brought the letter of introduction knew nothing of this plan, and that he came to me only because the journal with which I was connected had always shown itself in sympathy with the Liberal aspirations of enlightened Prussians. Why even under such conditions he should have come to expound the plan to me I never knew, as it was not possible I could render it any practical assistance, and it was absolutely impossible that I could commend it to the world in the columns of the 'Morning Star.' Like all grand schemes, it was remarkably simple in its nature. It was, in fact, strictly and literally Captain Bobadil's immortal plan, although my German visitor warmly repudiated the suggestion that he had borrowed it from Ben Jonson; and declared

— and, I dare say, with perfect truth — that he had never heard of Captain Bobadil before. I am afraid he thought my suggestion rather flippant and quite unbecoming the gravity of the situation; but he mastered his feelings and expounded his plan all the same. The plan, then, simply was that a society should be formed of young and devoted Germans, a sort of Tugendbund of gladiators who should occupy themselves in challenging and killing off one by one the whole Junker party. These were before the days of General Trochu's famous pact with death; but the idea was that of a sort of pact with death all the same. My friend made his calculations very calmly; and he did not foolishly or arrogantly assume that the swordsmanship of his party must needs be always superior to that of their Junker adversaries. No, he had no such vain imaginings. He counted that there would be a certain number of victims among the Liberal heroes, and he made indeed a large allowance, left quite a broad margin for such inevitable losses; but this allowance in nowise affected the ultimate success of his plan. It was all a matter of figures, don't you see — the Liberals were many, the Junkers few. Numbers must tell in the end. The happy day must come when the last Junker was destined to fall to earth; and then the hour of freedom would sound — Astræa would return. Now, my friend who talked on in this way was not a lunatic. Putting aside his scheme he was as steady and prosaic an old German as you could meet under the Lindens of Berlin or on the Luther Platz of Königsberg. He was as earnest, argumentative, and profoundly wearisome over his project as if he were expounding to an admiring class of students the relations between the Ego and the Non-Ego. I need hardly say that one single beam, even the

faintest, of the sense of the ridiculous never shone in upon him during his long and earnest exposition of the patriotic virtue, the completeness and the mathematical certainty, of his masterly project. I was not able to encourage him; and he was not open to argument. I made it clear to him — at least, as clear as I could — that even if I approved of his plan it was not within my power to offer it the slightest assistance; and that the object in life of the 'Morning Star' was not the commendation of a grand scientific scheme of duelling, even though with a Liberal political purpose to sanction its plan of campaign. My visitor never favoured me with a second call.

Let me bring back one other and a sadder recollection from those glimpses of 'The Exile-World of London.' There came to me once a visitor from Naples, an Italian of high education and character, a lawyer by profession, a passionate devotee of Italian unity, filled with a positive hatred for the expelled Bourbons. He explained to me that he had discovered in one of the Neapolitan prisons a number of instruments of torture, rusty old iron chains and racks and screws and cages of silence and other such hideous contrivances. He became the possessor of these curiosities, and he had obtained from the new Italian Government a certificate of the genuineness of his discoveries — that is to say, a paper certifying that the instruments were actually found in the place where the owner professed to have found them. The Italian authorities, of course, could say nothing as to whether these instruments had or had not been used as implements of punishment and machines of torture; they might have lain rusting there since the middle ages, they might have been used — public opinion and Mr. Gladstone said that things as

horrible had been done — in the reign of King Bomba. The Italian authorities only certified that the things had been found somewhere in a Neapolitan prison. My new friend, the Neapolitan lawyer, however, firmly believed that they had been used down to the very last as instruments of torture by the expelled Bourbon dynasty; and he became inspired with the idea that to take his collection of horrors first to London and then to the United States, and to exhibit them publicly and deliver lectures on them and on their use, would arouse such a tempest of righteous indignation among free peoples, as must sweep oppressive dynasties off the face of all creation. This idea became a positive faith with him. He brought his treasure of rusty iron to London and proposed to take a great hall there and to engage public lecturers, and thus to begin the work of his mission and of his life. I did my best to dissuade him from such an undertaking. He had brought letters of introduction to me which commanded my respect, and there was an evident sincerity about him which filled me with sympathy and with pity. I told him frankly that just at that time public opinion in London, and throughout England generally, had become utterly indifferent to the Bourbons. The fervour of interest about the Neapolitan revolution had gone by; the excitement of the thing was over: Englishmen in general wished well to Italian unity, and were glad that the Bourbons had been expelled from Naples; but they had heard a good deal about the whole matter, and believed that it was all well settled for the time, and they did not want to hear any more about it at the moment. Some new things had come up; we were all just then concerned a good deal about the Polish insurrection which was going on, the great American war

was occupying public attention and dividing public sympathy, and London audiences cared no more for the time about the crimes of the Bourbons than they did about the crimes of the Borgias. My friend, however, was not to be thus lightly dissuaded. He really believed at first that it would be possible for him to induce some great English orator, Mr. Gladstone for instance, or Mr. Bright, to deliver lectures on these instruments and on the guilt of the system which employed them. Gradually he became more moderate in his views; and he applied to this or that professional lecturer to undertake the task of exposition for him. His applications were all in vain; no public lecturer of any name would have anything to do with an enterprise so obviously doomed to failure. He could not attempt the task himself, for the very good reason that he spoke no English. At last he induced a lady who was somewhat ambitious of a public career — the era of woman as a platform orator was only just beginning — to lecture for him, and he took a large hall for a series of nights, and advertised widely, and went to great expense. I believe he staked all he had in money or credit on the success of the enterprise; and it was not a commercial enterprise in any sense — the making of money was not his object. He would readily have given all he had to blow up a flame of public indignation against the Bourbons and despotism in general. I need hardly say that the enterprise was a complete failure. The London public never manifested the slightest interest in the exhibition; the lecture hall was almost empty. I believe the poor Neapolitan tried again and again, but the result was always the same; the London public would not look or listen, would not even come near the hall. He spent his money in vain, and got into debt in vain. His

instruments of torture must have inflicted agonies enough upon their owner to satisfy the mind of King Bomba's cruellest gaoler. At last he could bear it no longer: he wrote a few short letters to some London friends, thanking them in simple words for what efforts they had made to assist him in his object; acknowledging that he had been over-sanguine, and informing us that he had now given up the enterprise. Nothing more was said or hinted in this melancholy memorial. A day or two after he locked himself up in his room; somebody heard an explosion, but took no particular notice; he occupied two or three rooms in a dismal barrack-like lodging-house, sacred to cosmopolitan exiles. The lady who had endeavoured to give voice to my poor friend's scheme came later in the day to see him. As no effect was produced by knocking, the door was broken open; and the poor Neapolitan was found lying dead, a pistol still in his hand, a pistol bullet in his brain.

CHAPTER IX

THE 'MORNING STAR' — A RETROSPECT

My connection with the 'Morning Star' came to an end in the early autumn of 1868, when I paid my first visit to the United States. The present seems a fitting moment for me to indulge in a retrospect of the time I spent in the editorial rooms of the newspaper, and to recall in memory the forms of the men who were fellow workers with me in those dear old days. We had a hard fight of it on the 'Morning Star' in those days. We advocated all sorts of schemes which were odious in the eyes of what was called society; we were in favour of vote by ballot, of the extension of the suffrage to all male citizens not disqualified by personal character, and other such wild and revolutionary schemes which have now so long been the law of the land that no one remembers how wild and revolutionary they once were held to be. We were for a national system of education; we were totally against an aggressive foreign policy; and, indeed, were against all wars except wars made necessary by the duty of self-defence; we were admirers of the American Republic; we refused to believe that all foreigners were our natural born enemies; we were against capital punishment; and, in fact, no one at any other period of the world anywhere was ever so anarchical as we were then. I had served for one Session as reporter in the Gallery of the House

of Commons for the 'Morning Star,' and after that session I was appointed foreign editor of the paper, my chief recommendation, I believe, for that post being that I was able to read most of the Continental journals, although I never had any particular gift for the speaking of foreign languages. As foreign editor I had to write many of the leading articles on questions of foreign policy, and I used to sit in the Press Gallery of the House of Commons when some important debate on foreign affairs was going on.

The editor of the paper was then the late Mr. Samuel Lucas, a brother-in-law of John Bright, and brother of Frederick Lucas, a distinguished man in his time, who from being a Quaker had become a Catholic, was the owner and editor of the 'Tablet' newspaper, and sat in the House of Commons for some years as the representative of an Irish county. Samuel Lucas, the editor of the 'Morning Star,' was a man who, as I used to think at the time, bore a considerable personal resemblance to Thackeray. Like Thackeray, he was tall and had a large head with thick hair prematurely white, and like Thackeray he had a complexion almost absolutely bloodless. He was a man of great ability and much reading, a charming associate, specially fond of encouraging young men and drawing out in them whatever was worth encouraging. The business manager of the paper was Mr. Alfred Hutchinson Dymond, who was at one time secretary to the Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, and who, after he had given up his engagement on the 'Morning Star,' went out to Canada and settled there, was for some years a member of the Dominion Parliament, and is now the head of a great public institution in one of the Canadian provinces. The sub-editor of the 'Morning Star' was Mr. Charles

Cooper, who is now, and has been for many years, the chief editor of the 'Scotsman' in Edinburgh. The 'Morning Star' published an evening edition, which was edited by Mr. F. W. Chesson, whose name is well remembered by all who took any interest in the many philanthropic associations to whose work he devoted all the time he had to spare from his business as a journalist.

We were all, I fancy, what would be called by unsympathetic observers rather a 'viewy' set of persons, full of immense faith in the humanitarian work which yet remained to be done in the world and in which we fondly believed that we too might bear our part. One of the principal leader writers on the paper was Washington Wilks, a man of singular ability, earnestness, and eloquence, a convinced democrat, if ever there was one, and with a remarkable gift as a popular orator. Washington Wilks would probably have made a great career for himself if he had gone to the United States, and perhaps might have done well even here if he had kept himself to journalism altogether. But he loved to rouse a public meeting, and Louis Blanc, who heard him speak more than once, told me with enthusiasm that Wilks was a born orator. During the American civil war the 'Morning Star' strongly championed the cause of the Northern States. The 'Daily News' and the 'Morning Star' were the only two daily journals in London which held such unpopular views — unpopular at least so far as what is called society is concerned. Wilks was a devotee of the Northern cause; and the manner of his death was characteristic of the man. He died suddenly while addressing a public meeting held in London in support of that cause; and the last words that ever passed from his lips were 'the great American

republic.' One of our leader writers who wrote chiefly on lighter subjects — on what are called social subjects — was the late Leicester Buckingham, son of the once famous traveller James Silk Buckingham, founder of the 'Athenæum,' who sat for some years in the House of Commons, and was made fun of very often by the humorists on the staff of 'Punch.' Leicester Buckingham was a dramatic author, and was very successful in his craft, or rather I should say that he was successful as an adapter of French plays to the English stage; for about that time it was the humour of English managers not to think it worth while venturing to produce on a London stage any piece that had not previously obtained the sanction of a Paris audience. We used to have a weekly column of gossip on social, literary, artistic, and theatrical subjects which was written by my old friend Edmund Yates, who styled himself for the purpose 'The Flaneur.' Yates' weekly contribution was one of the earliest specimens of a kind of essay which became very familiar indeed of later days, and makes a feature of almost every weekly paper now. Then it was uncommon, even among weekly papers, and I think the 'Morning Star' was the first daily paper which ventured to introduce it.

We had a pleasant sort of social institution at the 'Morning Star' office in those days. We had a five o'clock tea at which all the members of the editorial staff assembled every day; and at which we discussed the topics to be chosen for leading articles, and interchanged all manner of suggestions about new literary devices to instruct and to amuse the public. We ventured then on the publication of satirical and humorous poems, assailing, or at all events making fun of, our political opponents; and we indulged ourselves in fan-

ciful parodies of Tory speeches in the House of Commons. John Bright sometimes came to tea with us and listened with great good humour to our outbursts of levity, doing us the credit to believe that we had a serious purpose under all our attempts at frivolity. Later on the editorial staff was joined by a rising young Scotch advocate, John Gorrie, who had left Edinburgh determined to settle in London, and had taken to journalism as the readiest way of beginning his career. Gorrie afterwards rose to high distinction in the Colonial service, was made Sir John Gorrie, and became Chief Justice of Mauritius. An all too early death cut short his very promising career. Mr. Lucas died in the early part of 1865 sincerely and deeply regretted by his associates and comrades of the 'Morning Star,' who had come to appreciate him so thoroughly and to love him so well. I then succeeded to the place of editor in chief; and I am very proud of the fact that I was able to secure on the editorial staff of the 'Morning Star' the services of some men who have since won for themselves distinguished rank in journalism and in literature which is outside journalism. One of our associates in this way was Mr. William Black, whose first literary productions of any importance appeared in the columns of the 'Morning Star' and the 'Evening Star,' and who has made for himself a place in the front rank of living novelists. Another was Mr. E. D. J. Wilson, who has since become one of the principal leader writers on the 'Times.' Yet another was Edward Russell, now Sir Edward Russell, chief editor of the 'Liverpool Daily Post,' who, during his too short career in the House of Commons, made a distinct mark as a debater, and may, I trust, some day find himself on the familiar green benches again. Those used to be pleasant and genial

gatherings, those five o'clock teas in the 'Morning Star' rooms. I do not know that I ever listened to brighter talk or heard more original ideas or more startling paradoxes than those which used to enliven the more serious course of our disquisitions and our discussions on the subject of appropriate leading articles. I remember one occasion while Mr. Lucas was still living when a sudden quotation from Byron's 'Don Juan' threw us all into laughter. The great French advocate and orator M. Berryer was on a visit to London, and was entertained at a banquet by one of the Inns of Court. We were naturally very anxious to have a full and accurate report of the great speech which he was expected to deliver. Our trouble was that M. Berryer was to speak in his own language, and although many of our reporters knew French, it was not easy to find one who could be counted on to give a full and accurate report of a speech delivered in French by a great orator like M. Berryer. We made a choice, however, and felt good hope that we had secured the fitting man. On the evening of the banquet we sat for a long time talking over all manner of editorial arrangements for the next day's paper. Suddenly Mr. Lucas happened to look at his watch, and seeing that the hour was becoming late, said, 'I wonder how our poor friend at the Temple'—meaning the reporter who was to take a note of M. Berryer's speech—'is feeling just now.' 'No doubt,' said one of the members of the staff, 'he has just called

> Unto his nearest follower or henchman,
> "Oh, Jack, I'm floored by that 'ere bloody Frenchman!"'

During my editorship we devised a new feature for the evening paper in the shape of a sort of feuilleton after the fashion of the Paris journals, to be made up

of some bright and sprightly matter under the general heading of 'Readings by Starlight.' It was not of much importance what the subject might be so long as the article was well written, interesting, and attractive. I am glad to say that the idea was very successful, and was especially successful in the fact that it induced a number of brilliant young men previously but little known, or not known at all, in literature to try their hands at a contribution to the 'Readings by Starlight.' I feel very proud indeed when I think of some of the men whose names appeared for the first time in print as contributors to this particular column of the 'Evening Star.' I received one day a visit from a perfect stranger to me, who told me he thought he could write some sketches of barrack-room life which would be likely to interest our readers. He had been a soldier, and had seen some service in different parts of the world; his name was then unknown to me, it has since become famous wherever English literature is known — his name was Archibald Forbes. He showed me some of the contributions he proposed to offer; and I can only say that no editor worth his salt could have failed to be struck with their vigour and their originality. He kept up his connection with the 'Evening Star,' I think, until the paper ceased to exist; and then as war correspondent of the 'Daily News' he won renown all over the world. Another of the new contributors to the 'Readings by Starlight' was Mr. George Manville Fenn, since then one of the most prolific and one of the most popular novel writers. Yet another was Mr. Richard Whiteing, whom I have already mentioned in this book, and who is now one of our most distinguished journalists, and is the author of two novels, 'The Democracy' and 'The Island,' which I have read again and again, and always with

increasing wonder that they did not succeed in obtaining a far wider popularity. The late Mr. Hain Friswell, author of 'The Gentle Life,' used to contribute a weekly column to our 'Readings by Starlight,' under the title of 'The Censor.' Friswell, however, owed nothing of his popularity to the 'Evening Star,' because he came to us at the height of the wonderful success of his 'Gentle Life,' which seemed to have sympathetic hold of a large body of the public to whom many a writer of a quite different order might have appealed in vain. If Friswell had not written in prose, if he had schooled himself to write in verse, he might have become the poet laureate of all the well-intentioned persons in the country. We used to get into a great many side controversies in those days. It was hardly ever the fortune of the 'Morning Star' to be on the popular, or at all events the socially popular, side of any public question whatever. While the American civil war was going on we had society and the classes all dead against us. I well remember what assistance we used to get in writing our leading articles on the Civil War from Leicester Buckingham, whose name I have already mentioned. Buckingham was not much of a politician, and his views on the American question were governed chiefly by his detestation of slavery. But he made himself of much service to our political leader writers by the intimate knowledge he had of many of the American States, which he obtained during his travels with his father. At that time anything like a personal acquaintance with the American States was a very rare acquisition among English journalists. When the news came of a great battle Leicester Buckingham could always tell us something about the scene and the surroundings of the encounter; could enable

one of our writers to add picturesque touches to his political commentary; and could help us to judge of probable chances of expected military movements by depicting to us the sort of natural difficulties which must under any conditions stand in the way of a successful advance on the part of a Federal army. We used to receive at that time frequent visits from Mr. Cyrus W. Field, the projector of the Atlantic cable scheme, which was then only a project; and he rendered to us unspeakable service by his intimate knowledge of every American State and of every American public organisation and public man on whose movement the course of events might in any way be supposed to depend. The present generation of newspaper readers could hardly understand how astonishing was the want of information at that time in this country on all subjects connected with the American republic. The very distances were a complete puzzle to the ordinary Briton, who was anxious to offer his opinion as to the future probabilities of the great contest. I was present myself at a dinner-party in London where a distinguished historian was one of the guests, and where the conversation turned on the passing events of the American civil war. The historian suddenly appealed to an American friend of mine who made one of the company, and asked him if he could explain why a Federal general whom he named did not rush to the assistance of General Grant, who then seemed to be confronted by serious difficulties in his approaches to Richmond. My American friend composedly answered that one difficulty in the way of this rapid junction of forces was that the Federal general referred to was nearly as far off from Grant as London from St. Petersburg.

We of the 'Morning Star' used to find ourselves in

frequent antagonism with the humorists of 'Punch' for instance. 'Punch' for a while was altogether hostile to the North, treated the defeat of Bull Run as an event that settled the military question once for all, and treated the Northern cause as one not only hopeless of success but utterly undeserving any chance of success. 'Punch' described us as 'the London Yankee Journal, "Morning Star" they call the thing.' We tried to retaliate after our own fashion, and a good many hard words were interchanged. I mention all this just now chiefly because it brings back pleasant and genial recollections of the friendly relations which subsisted meantime between some of the contributors to the 'Morning Star' and some of the contributors to 'Punch.' Shirley Brooks was then one of the principal contributors to 'Punch,' of which he afterwards became the editor. I wonder if there ever was in London journalism a more thoroughly companionable, delightful, genial associate or opponent than Shirley Brooks. He was a singularly handsome man with winning graceful manners and very refined literary taste. When he had a battle to fight he fought it to his very best; but he was always ready when he got the chance to hold out the hand of friendship to the man with whom he had been fighting. So while we were attacking each other in public many of the workers on 'Punch' and on the 'Morning Star' kept up a friendly frequent intercourse, and made jokes to each other and chaffed each other and interchanged odd views on public affairs and public men which did not always find expression in the columns of the serious daily paper or the weekly comic journal. Shirley Brooks had a special gift of throwing off sparkling little letters about passing events, and amid all his incessant occupation as journalist and author he took a delight in exercising it. I may

as well publish a few specimens of his playful work of this kind. On a certain October 15, he thus writes to me from 6 Kent Terrace, Regent's Park: —

'My dear McCarthy, — Thank you much for your letter. I am quite with you as to the fun of fighting, and hold with "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" that a man may be sure he is getting old when he gets good-natured. I hope that "The Star" and "Punch" will have many a good round over the residuum, the execution of Beales, teaching our new masters their letters, the niggers and all that; but I am quite sure that what you and I have to do with those combats will be all done in the right way.

'But I assure you that you won't think "Punch" too hard on —— when you turn to a quarter of a column of low abuse which he emitted some six weeks back. I knew you must have been out of town.

'The more I have to work the more I appreciate the story of the shop. "My curse on the man who invented working by candlelight," said the journeyman. "Yes," said the apprentice, "and on the other man that invented working by daylight."

'Ever yours faithfully,

'Shirley Brooks.'

I ought to explain, perhaps, for the instruction of younger readers, some of the allusions in Shirley Brooks's letter. 'The residuum' was a phrase used by Mr. Bright to describe the class of persons with no settled residence, who alone, according to his views, might be fairly left without the electoral franchise. The suggested 'execution of Beales' is a purely jocular allusion to a man of high character and very good abilities, Mr.

Edmond Beales, a barrister who at that time took a very prominent part as leader of an extremely Radical and Democratic section of the London Liberals. Mr. Beales seemed quite a Red Spectre in the eyes of all Conservatives and of society generally; and I daresay a good many of the latter class thought seriously what Shirley Brooks only suggested in fun, that the safety of the State might some time demand his consignment to the scaffold. Edmond Beales was once addressing a meeting on a Sunday in Hyde Park in favour of some of his own rather advanced views on political questions. On the outskirts of the meeting was a very considerable Tory mob. When the proceedings were over Mr. Beales and some of his friends remained on the platform, and meanwhile the Radical meeting melted away. Some of Beales's friends observed, however, that the Tory mob remained motionless, and the idea came into their minds that there was some intention of making an attack on Beales when he left the platform. Not a word was said to Beales upon the subject; but when he was about to descend from the platform and make his way through the Park he was accompanied by two stalwart supporters, one on each side of him, the O'Donoghue and Charles Bradlaugh. Mr. Bradlaugh, as many people will remember, was a man of colossal frame and gigantic physical strength. The O'Donoghue was a brilliant figure in the social and political life of London at that time; he had a magnificent presence and was built like the beau-ideal of a guardsman. Thus escorted, Mr. Beales, personally unconscious of any danger, passed through the Tory crowd unmolested. It would have required some very reckless opponents indeed to begin an attack upon a man guarded by the O'Donoghue on the one side and Charles Bradlaugh on the other. Mr.

Beales was never executed, but was made a County Court Judge; and died in quiet respectability. His name at one time was heard of all over Europe. I was dining one day at a house in Paris when some talk arose about English politics. A French gentleman present said, addressing me, 'I have heard your two great English orators, your Bright and your Beales.' I endeavoured gently to explain to him that we did not in England quite class the two men together as orators; but I found that my explanation was thrown away; and he still triumphed in having heard our Bright and our Beales. Shirley Brooks's allusion to the teaching our new masters their letters has to do with the famous passage in a speech by Robert Lowe, afterwards Lord Sherbrooke, in which he warned the House of Commons that having emancipated the working men we have made them our new masters, and had better begin as soon as possible to teach them to read and write. The niggers, of course, were the familiar subject of controversy in the Southern States of America and in Jamaica.

Another time Shirley Brooks writes to me about a notice of the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' which appeared in the 'Morning Star,' and closed with the words: 'Perhaps the best thing in the number is an imaginary conversation between Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell.'

'My dear McCarthy, — There is no "perhaps" about it; the fact is as stated, and the author tells you so and he ought to know. But I do think it is a good vein, and I mean to work it, as it simply gives me everybody who has lived in England for the last 130 years. — Ever yours, S. Brooks.'

The idea was to continue the conversations of Johnson and Boswell down to the time of writing, so as to

give Boswellian questions and Johnsonian expositions on the various public men and social problems of England. Again he writes: 'Thanks for your kind note, which much gratified me, though, to say sooth, I had little doubt that we understood one another. I suppose that we shall exchange shots *in re* Quashibungo. I see the prosecution begins: I am on the other side. — Ever yours, SHIRLEY BROOKS.'

The 'Quashibungo' affair was the prosecution which arose in consequence of the execution of Gordon, and the other steps taken to suppress the supposed insurrection in Jamaica. A few lines more may be quoted: 'I beg to return you my very best thanks for your kind and prompt courtesy. I was very desirous that my disclaimer should appear in the "Star," and I am sincerely obliged to you. — Most truly yours, SHIRLEY BROOKS. P. S. — Falstaff says, "the devil take one party and his dam the other," which I echo. How is a good picture to be made out of a non-situation like this? "Waiting till Monday." ' Monday was evidently the day for the next meeting of Parliament; but I am sorry to say that I have wholly forgotten the nature of the 'non-situation' which rendered it so difficult for anyone to make a good picture.

I have quoted these letters, partly because of their genuine vivacity and partly, too, to show that in those days of most serious political fighting we did not carry our spirit of battle into the ordinary intercourse of private life. I was on friendly terms also with Mark Lemon, who, as everyone knows, was for a considerable time editor of 'Punch'; and I am glad and proud to say that I have had friends on the literary and the artistic staff on 'Punch' all through my London life. But in those far-off days to which I have lately been referring

we fought in print much more strenuously and fiercely than is our habit in the quieter times which have come upon us in later years. Most of the great questions we battled over at that time have been settled long since; and it is probably somewhat hard for younger readers to understand now how the country could have been convulsed over the difference between a £10 suffrage and an ordinary household suffrage; how any large number of educated persons could ever have persuaded themselves that the Southern States were destined to carry all before them in the civil war; how any number of other educated persons could have brought themselves to believe that the whole question for or against slavery was settled by the assertion — even supposing it to be true — that the negroes in the South were better cared for than the negroes in the North; and that every foreign state in the world down to Guatemala and Venezuela was only waiting for an opportunity to throw an invading army on the shores of England and forthwith proceed to occupy London. But we took our opinions on both sides of any question very seriously and strongly at that time. There was a very amiable and capable public man of those days whose heart, whose education, and whose family traditions led him to be on what we of the 'Morning Star' thought to be the right side of almost every political controversy, but who had a way of thinking at a critical moment that his comrades were going rather too far in one direction, and of getting up in the House of Commons and suddenly advising them to moderate their zeal. John Bright knew the man well and esteemed him highly; but he said to me one day, 'Our friend is a very well-meaning fellow, I quite admit, but he is not exactly the sort of man to go tiger-hunting with. Just at the moment

when you and he are standing together and the tiger is making for you it might occur to him that there was a good deal to be said for the tiger's view of the case; and so he might happen out of pure conscientiousness to leave you alone with the tiger.'

I must not close this chapter of my reminiscences without giving some account of the one and only expedition as Special Correspondent in which I was ever engaged. The expedition is worth mentioning because it had to do with an important historical event, and because it brought me into the presence of two great historical personages, one of whose names, at all events, will belong to the history of the world. I went out to Königsberg in Prussia in October, 1861, to describe the coronation ceremonies of the King William who, some ten years afterwards, was proclaimed German Emperor at Versailles. King William, it will be remembered, succeeded his brother Frederick William, and was determined to have his coronation ceremonial conducted after the rigid old fashion, in order to mark his disapproval of the new-fangled ideas about popular choice and the sovereignty of the people. The new King was determined that all the antique feudal usages should be restored in honour of his coronation, and, above all, that he must place his crown upon his own head as an indication that he was a sovereign by Divine Right, and not because his accession to the Throne was in accordance with the wish of the majority of his subjects. English readers were then much interested in the ceremonies at Königsberg because of all that they had been reading in Carlyle's Life of Frederick the Great. Being myself, at the time, a devotee of German literature and somewhat of a dreamer in many ways, I think I was more interested in Königsberg as the home of

Immanuel Kant, than as the coronation city of the Prussian Kings. The ceremonials took place in the Cathedral of Königsberg and Meyerbeer in person conducted the musical service. At the appropriate moment of the service the King took the crown himself from the eminence on which it was placed and put it on his own head. A moment later he set another crown upon the head of his wife. I had the honour on a later day of being presented, along with some other foreign journalists, to the King, and we were met by his Majesty with a very gracious, informal, and friendly reception. I ought to bear the presentation clearly in memory because his Majesty King William was the only sovereign to whom I ever had the honour to be presented. But I must say that my interest was much more completely absorbed in my presentation to another great personage about the same time — I mean to the great statesman whose death has but lately sent a thrill of emotion through all the civilised world. Herr von Bismarck, as he was then, had expressed a wish that some of the English journalists might be privately presented to him; and we were all only too delighted to accept the invitation. Even at that time Bismarck had begun to impress upon Europe the stamp of his great personality. There was something about his career which told the world of the coming of a great man destined to make his presence felt on the very map of Europe. I went to his reception the victim of a struggle between eager interest and intense nervous anxiety. I could read German quite well and could speak it, at that time, with a certain fluency, but was painfully conscious of my own terrible facility for going wrong in cases and tenses and genders. I had been preparing in my own mind some little speeches to deliver and trying to keep

the *gehabts* and *gewesen seyns* and all the rest of them properly arranged. Introduced into the presence of Bismarck, my nervous trepidation was not at all diminished by the sight of his gigantic figure, in the steel corselet and white uniform of his cuirassier regiment. I think I felt on the whole rather more utterly nervous than I did when many years later I rose for the first time to address Mr. Speaker in the House of Commons. But I received from the genial Herr von Bismarck a sort of encouragement which I could not possibly have got from the most obliging Speaker of the Commons House of Parliament. Bismarck advanced to meet me and put me at my ease at once by informing me in the most fluent English that if I preferred to talk in that language it would be no trouble to him, for he declared that he was rather proud of his knowledge of English; and he added good-humouredly that he had got into the way of boasting that he could exchange London chaff with a London cabman. No words could describe my rapturous sensation of relief and the joy with which I banished the *gehabts* and *gewesen seyns* from my mind, for that occasion at all events. Bismarck spoke English fluently and idiomatically, although with a somewhat marked and heavy German accent. He talked for awhile about London and London newspapers; and seemed to have a very good general knowledge about English journalism. I met him once afterwards in Berlin, when the coronation festivities transferred themselves to the capital city, and there again I had the good fortune to have some conversation with him. Bismarck was well read in English literature, especially in Shakespeare and some of the elder writers; and he was very happy in occasional quotations from these in some of the debates of the Prussian Parliament. Nothing could

be more happy, for instance, than his citation on one memorable occasion of the famous lines spoken by Harry Hotspur, beginning with

> 'But I remember when the fight was done,
> When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,
> Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword.'

The peculiar expression used by Bismarck at the time of the siege of Paris, the words in which he spoke of leaving the Parisians to fry in their own grease, have almost invariably been described as Bismarck's own; but they were taken from Chaucer, and were declared by Bismarck at the time to be a quotation from Chaucer. More than once in the Prussian Parliament he cited the authority of John Stuart Mill in support of some proposition which he was endeavouring to press upon his audience. I shall always feel personally and peculiarly grateful to Bismarck for some kindly words which he spoke about myself, long years after the coronation ceremonies in Prussia, at a time when the charges of organising assassination and paying assassins were made against the Irish Nationalist Members of Parliament — the charges which led to the formation of the Parnell Commission. Bismarck was interviewed on the general subject by the correspondent of a German newspaper, and the answer which he gave was published in the journal which was understood to reflect Bismarck's own political opinions. The answer was just such as might have been expected from any experienced statesman and man of the world like Bismarck. Without professing any actual knowledge of the subject, it pointed to the inherent improbabilities of such a story as that on which the charges were founded, and it did me the great personal honour to say that no one who

knew anything of my literary and political career would be likely to believe me an agent in any such abominable conspiracy. My first feeling at the time was that I was not sorry the accusation had been made, if only because it was the occasion of my receiving some favourable words from such a man as Bismarck. I never saw the great statesman since those far-off days of King William's coronation; and although I was in Berlin several times in more recent years I never sought an interview with him, or took any steps to recall myself to his notice. I do not even know to this hour whether he ever read any of my writings; but I know that I shall never forget the kindly words that were ascribed to him in the journal which we all understood was guided by the influence of his inspiration.

I had made up my mind to resign the editorship of the 'Morning Star,' partly because I was anxious to pay a visit to America and to stay there a considerable time, but partly also, and indeed still more, because Mr. Bright had decided in 1868 to withdraw from any direct connection with the paper. About that time it had become evident that a Liberal Ministry was almost certain to come back to power with Gladstone at its head, and Bright felt no doubt that he would be asked to take office, and he was then so devoted to Gladstone that, little as he cared for Ministerial position and its work, he did not see his way to refuse. My chief inducement to remain editor of the 'Morning Star' was because of Bright's interest in the success of the paper and his constant visits to its editorial rooms; and as these visits were to cease I thought I could not do better than take the opportunity to make my long contemplated visit to the United States. Mr. Bright's withdrawal from active association with the paper was, I believe, the

main reason, although indirectly, why it ceased to exist. So far as I know Mr. Bright never had any pecuniary concern in the 'Morning Star'; but he looked after some shares which belonged to a relative, and thus obtained a right to interfere in its management. Bright was a man of an extremely scrupulous conscience; and he had made up his mind that one who takes a place in a Government has no right to have anything to do with the guiding of a newspaper. Other public men have not always been quite so scrupulous; but Bright's own principles of conduct were a law to him, and he acted according to his convictions. He accepted office under Mr. Gladstone, and he ceased to interfere with or influence in any way the editorial conduct of the 'Morning Star.' There was nothing in the management and policy of the 'Star' under its new editor which made it less valuable to the Radical cause than it ever had been before. The man who succeeded me in the editorial chair was one of the ablest political writers and one of the most accomplished and conscientious public men this country has known in its later days — I mean my friend Mr. John Morley. Several of my old colleagues, including Mr. Charles Cooper, now editor of the 'Scotsman,' Sir Edward Russell, now editor of the 'Liverpool Daily Post,' and the late F. W. Chesson continued to work on as before. But after Bright's withdrawal some of the proprietors, I believe, began to be dissatisfied with the 'Morning Star' as a commercial speculation. In fact, it needed energy like Bright's, patience like Bright's, and a faith like Bright's, to enable men to continue that long uphill struggle against the public opinion of what was called Society, and the advertisers who look to Society. Mr. Bright would have been quite content if the paper could have maintained itself

and made some small return to its owners for the present, feeling himself repaid by the fact that it became a public teacher of the doctrines and the principles he advocated, and believing in the effect of time and labour to make it win its battles and have its reward in the end. Other men, however, were inclined to take a more purely business-like view of the whole struggle; and although I have been assured by those who ought to know, that the 'Star' was gaining steadily in circulation and in influence, its career was suddenly brought to a close. When I returned from my first visit to America I found Mr. Bright rather dissatisfied with the political condition of things. He had the most absolute faith in Mr. Gladstone's leadership, and was prepared to go with him as far as Gladstone saw his way to go, on all questions of taxation, of electoral reform, and in dealing with the Irish State Church and with the Irish land tenure system. But he was under the impression that some at least of the men on whom Gladstone was disposed to lean were not really strong and assured Liberals at heart, and would be likely sooner or later to desert their leader and go over to the Conservative camp. At this time the question of Home Rule had not come up in the active Parliamentary sense — that is to say, there was no party of Home Rulers in the House of Commons whose action on that subject could possibly have threatened the existence of a Ministry. The Irish National members were very few in number, and although they were known to be always hostile to the Act of Union, they were not strong enough to make anything like a formidable party, and the very name of Home Rule had not yet been brought into political controversy. I may as well say, however, that at no time of which I know anything was Mr. Bright a Home

Ruler. He was for giving Ireland through the Imperial Parliament everything that Ireland would have done for herself if she had a Parliament of her own; but he was opposed to the idea of two separate Parliaments. I am not now discussing Mr. Bright's political views on the subject: I am only stating what I always understood them to be. I know that some of my own countrymen have thought that in his later years he cooled in his zeal for the redress of Irish grievances. I can only say for myself that I never saw any reason to believe in any cooling of his zeal or in any change of his opinions. All the time that I knew him, as I have just said, he was prepared to do anything, in the way of legislation for Ireland, which Ireland would herself have done if she had a Parliament of her own; and he used to contend, when we talked over the matter merely as a speculative question, that Ireland would have no fair claim even to demand Home Rule until it had been made clear that the majority in the Imperial Parliament were unwilling or unable to do her justice. He used to contend that the action of the Liberal party with regard to the Irish State Church and in regard to the Irish land tenure system proved that the leaders and the people of Great Britain were growing every day into greater enlightenment on the Irish question, and a more earnest desire to do all that could be done to make Ireland contented and prosperous. But he had a strong objection to the setting up of separate Parliaments, and it was in vain to argue with him on this point. When at last he definitely broke away from Mr. Gladstone on this subject I at least did not find myself able to accuse him of inconsistency or of any sudden change of opinion. The truth is that Bright had in him very little of the sentimental in politics. He was what is called a

practical politician altogether; he never took the least interest in what was called the doctrine of nationalities. If Ireland got all her just demands satisfied it seemed to him that it did not matter whether the satisfaction came from the Imperial Parliament or from a Parliament of Ireland's own. Therein I think his statesmanship was deficient because it wanted that sympathetic faculty which enables a man to take account of feelings that are not exactly his own. The doctrine of nationalities was not a reality to him, but it remains a reality in politics to the end.

CHAPTER X

QUEEN OF THE WESTERN WAVES

'All my life long I have loved rivers, and poets who sang of rivers.' These words were written long years ago by one who might have made a great name in English prose literature if he had not been drawn into the whirlpool of politics by the captivation of the Irish National cause — I mean the late John Mitchel, the most famous of the rebels of 1848. The words always awakened and still awaken a deep echo in my sympathies. I, too, all my life long have loved rivers and poets who sang of rivers. Among the rivers that I have known and loved — and I am glad to say that there are many of them, and in various climates — there are some few that have made an especial impression on my life. There is the Lee near which I was born, in the south of Ireland, the Lee which has been sung by no less a poet than Edmund Spenser, and the Blackwater worshipped by Spenser, and the Thames above the bridges, and of course the Rhine, which Disraeli in one of his novels rapturously addresses as 'river of my youth,' and is indeed the river of many a youthful fancy still, although now I am afraid it is going a little out of fashion; and there is the Hudson — the Hudson of the Catskill mountains and of Sleepy Hollow and of the Palisades — the Hudson that flows between the city of New York and the sunset shores of New Jersey. I take the mag-

nificent Hudson as the opening channel of my present excursion; for I am about to recall some of my recollections of the United States of America. Naturally I begin with my memories of New York. Now, the New York which I first knew and which I have known at various intervals for more than twenty years, was a very different city in many ways from the New York of the present hour. There were no such vast piles of heaven-scaling buildings along the principal streets of the New York which I first knew, no such vast tiers of offices over offices reached by almost endless successions of 'elevators'; there were no immense hotels with pleasure gardens on their roofs; in those distant days the Fifth Avenue Hotel was supposed to be the envy and the admiration of all neighbouring cities, not to say of the whole civilised world. In those days, too, a great iron bridge spanned the 'down-town' part of Broadway, and enabled cautious and timid passengers to cross from one side of the street to the other without peril from the crush of wheeled traffic. It used to delight me in my earlier New York days to stand upon that bridge and watch the great tide of life flowing incessantly up and down between Central Park and the Battery. The bridge was a favourite station for energetic, not to say cheeky, little bootblacks, not a few of whom came personally or ancestrally from my own country, and who found many opportunities of a quiet job there. Naturally the careful pedestrian who climbed the bridge to avoid the crowd was just the sort of person to think it a favourable opportunity for having his boots blacked; and at that time even the best hotels of New York had not quite risen to the level of the ordinary European's ideas with regard to the provision for the morning blacking of boots. I was standing on the bridge one

day, studying the crowd, as was my wont, and wholly absorbed in the study, when a shrill youthful voice accosted me with the words, 'Cap'n, shine yer boots?' At that time the great Civil War was not long over, and the chance distribution of military titles was ready and liberal. I paid no attention to the invitation, although it was many times repeated in tones of increasing earnestness, and sometimes emphasised by an admonitory tap on the boots which my young friend was anxious to shine. At last a rival little boy seemed to imagine that he saw where the cause of my indifference was to be found, and pushing aside the unsuccessful claimant he gave a military salute and appealed to me with the captivating words 'Brigadier-General, shine yer boots?' It would be needless to say that I found it impossible to resist an appeal accompanied with such a recognition of my military rank; and I had my boots 'shined' on the spot. The bridge disappeared even during my first residence in New York; it gave way, even as the old colonnade in Regent Street had given way, to the complaints which the shopkeepers made about the darkening of the light needed for the proper display of the goods in their windows. I always regretted the bridge, and even during my latest visit to New York, so many years after, I still felt the regret and chafed at the reckless innovations of modern improvement.

I retained the most genial reminiscences of New York and its life and its people and its surroundings, of its noble bay and of the islands on the bay and of the magnificent Hudson. The New York which I especially knew was not so much the New York of the great merchants and traders and bankers and millionaires, as of the authors, the literary men and women, the journalists, the public speakers, the preachers, and the exiles. My

first desire in visiting the American States was to know something of the life of the country, to get some personal knowledge of its institutions, to make myself for the time one of its population. Thus I lived somewhat as a travelling tinker might be said to do, doing my jobs of work as I went from place to place, and earning my expenses as I wandered along. I wrote in American newspapers and magazines; I published books in America; I delivered lectures in American halls; and I spoke on American platforms. I received a genial welcome everywhere, although when I first entered New York I had, except for a few letters of introduction, no means of making myself known to anybody. Up to the time of my visiting New York I had published nothing which bore my name. Two novels and a volume of essays by me had been printed in London, but the three books were published anonymously. I found, however, one of my novels passing as a serial through 'Harper's Magazine' when I arrived in New York, and though it did not bear my name it became the means of introducing me personally to the publishing house with which I have had many dealings of the most cordial and satisfactory kind, to me, from that day to this. It was known also to some American journalists and others that I had had something to do with that advocacy of the Northern cause in the great war which had been steadily maintained by the 'Morning Star'; thus, I soon found friends in New York, made friendships which exist to the present day, made friendships also which death too early severed. I ceased very soon to feel like a stranger in New York; and I cannot help, even now, looking back to it as a place to which in some measure I belonged at one time.

Among the earliest acquaintances I made was that of

William Cullen Bryant, the venerable poet, whose 'Thanatopsis' and other poems used to be the delight of many admirers on this side of the Atlantic as well as that. Bryant, when I knew him, was an old man, so far as the mere record of years could make him; but there was an eternal youthfulness in his spirit and in his feelings; and his movements had a vigour and elasticity about them which gave little suggestion of old age; he walked and rode and drove as if, like the shepherd boy in Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia,' 'he were never to grow old.' He had a noble presence, a majestic forehead, and a countenance which had much of the Olympian Jove about it. I have still with me — it is always an ornament of one of my rooms — a large and splendid photograph of himself which he gave me, and which I constantly show for the admiration of friends and visitors. Bryant was a man remarkably well read in all literatures. His translation of the 'Iliad' seemed to me to have more of the spirit of poetry in it than even the admirable version of Lord Derby; and he was thoroughly acquainted with the great writers of France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. He could speak several of the European languages, and yet although his facility in this way seemed to me something wonderful, he always declared modestly — but, I feel sure, with absolute sincerity — that when he spoke in a foreign language he could not help feeling that there was a sort of mist between himself and his subject. This interested and touched me all the more because I knew then and I know now so many men and women of the English-speaking race who fondly believe, and are not slow to hint expression of the belief, that they can speak all manner of foreign tongues just as well as they can speak their own. Cullen Bryant's was the first American

country house in which I ever spent any time. I sent him a letter of introduction from my friend Cyrus W. Field, and the result was a prompt invitation for my wife and myself to visit him at his country home. His country place was on Long Island, one of the islands that beautify the bay of New York, and lest we should possibly lose our way he came to us at the Fifth Avenue Hotel in order to give us his personal escort to his home. I remember well that as we crossed to the island in one of the small steamers he pointed out to me a picturesque creek in the shore to which we were approaching, and told me that that was the spot where Fenimore Cooper's 'Water Witch' was supposed to have been lying in one of the earlier scenes of the novel which once delighted all the youth of England and America. He asked me if I knew the novel, and I assured him that when a boy in a southern Irish seaport, I had loved the story, and that all the boys I knew loved it likewise. Then we fell to talking over Fenimore Cooper's 'Water Witch' and 'Red Rover,' and his 'Indian Chiefs,' and the delight they once gave to the world and the changes that had come over literature since they gave such delight; and he spoke with a certain melancholy humour of the fame that lights up and spreads abroad and then slowly is dimmed and so vanishes; and we agreed that the existing age, even in America, made but little account of Fenimore Cooper. I asked him some questions about Walt Whitman, whom my friend Moncure Conway had just been introducing to the English public; but Bryant shook his head, and professed himself no great believer in Walt Whitman. In truth, his innate love for the beauty of form in poetry somewhat dimmed his vision with regard to Whitman's merits. And, indeed, one had only to talk with the man, perhaps only to look at

him, in order to understand that the defects of Walt Whitman would be intolerable to him. For myself I could not settle the question so easily, and although I never was one of those who raved about Whitman, I could not help seeing that he had genuine originality and deep feeling; and when I afterwards came to know Whitman himself, I understood all the better the sincerity that was in him.

We reached Mr. Bryant's home by evening, and a most delightful spot it was — the very home for an American poet. We spent some most enjoyable days there; and it seemed to be a pleasure to him to show us everything — his grounds, his orchards, his fruit, his magnificent Isabel grapes, his fishponds, his drives, and his walks. He knew Europe well, at least as far as all the resorts of the ordinary tourist were concerned, and he had been to England again and again, and loved its rivers, its historic castles, and its old cathedral cities. The acquaintance thus begun, kept on during my first and second visit to the States, and indeed only closed with Bryant's death. He had a beautiful house in New York, in one of the streets running westward from Fifth Avenue. His daughter Julia kept house for him, and he entertained in most hospitable fashion. Throughout the winter he had frequent receptions — 'at homes' as we should now call them — and there one was sure to meet all that was attractive in the literary, artistic, and scientific circles of New York, and every distinguished stranger who happened to visit the city. His receptions were never great crushes, such as we see so often in London; there was no chance of one's having to stand on the stairs half the night without any hope of being able to mount higher or to get down and go away; they were friendly social gatherings where everybody was sup-

posed to know, or to be anxious to know, everybody else, and where the guests really conversed and exchanged ideas with each other. Bryant was fond of society, and although his years were advancing he could enjoy a pleasant dinner-party as well as the youngest of his friends.

One friendship which I obtained through my visits to Mr. Bryant was that of George Ripley, the scholar, writer, and polished charming gentleman whom I have already mentioned passingly in these reminiscences. Ripley had been a minister of religion, but had of late years given himself up to literature and to scholarship altogether. He was one of those who in companionship with Nathaniel Hawthorne, Margaret Fuller, Charles Dana, and others had founded the famous colony of Brook Farm which, as I have already reminded my readers, perhaps superfluously, Hawthorne has made immortal in his 'Blithedale Romance.' Ripley, too, had a beautiful house in the city, and used to give weekly receptions, which it was a delight to me to attend. He knew the great old cities of Europe well, as most cultivated Americans did and do, and he had a thoroughly artistic love for the famous places and the classic ruins of the old world. I must mention an anecdote about Ripley which created much quiet amusement at the time among the few to whom it was privately communicated. I should mention, in order to make the humour of the anecdote more apparent, that Ripley was a man then well on in years, of singularly handsome stately presence and graceful dignified bearing, and with a manner which for all its easy geniality still suggested something of the religious teacher's austerity. Not long before my first arrival in America there came on a short visit to the States a distinguished English literary man whose name has since that time been steadily

growing and growing in reputation. Not for worlds would I put into print the name of that distinguished man who is to be the hero of the anecdote. My English friend arrived in New York armed with some letters of introduction, and among the rest one to Dr. George Ripley. Ripley called on him at his hotel, the Sunday morning after his arrival in New York. Ripley chose the early part of the Sunday morning to call upon my friend, because he thought it would be agreeable to him to be taken to hear a great American preacher who was to deliver a sermon in one of the city churches that day. The Englishman and the American were very glad to meet each other, the name of each was quite familiar to the other, and the English visitor was also glad to have a chance of hearing the great preacher. They had some pleasant talk together, and then my English friend suddenly said, 'Before we go out, Dr. Ripley, may I not order you a cocktail?' Ripley became amazed, was not certain whether his ears had not deceived him: a cocktail on Sunday morning and just before going to church! The invitation was pressingly repeated. 'Surely, Dr. Ripley, you will not treat me like a stranger, you will allow me to order you a cocktail?' 'But I assure you,' stammered the bewildered Ripley, 'I never drink cocktails; I never drank a cocktail in my life.' Then a flash of inspiration came into the minds of each of them; and each knew that an absurd mistake had been made, and a frank explanation followed. The Englishman assured Dr. Ripley that before he left England a friend who professed to know all about the ways of American gentlemen had told him that every American began the morning with a cocktail, and that whenever an American visitor called to see him he must be sure to invite him to partake of such a refreshment. Each of the two

had a lively sense of humour, and they had many a pleasant laugh then and afterwards over the fidelity with which the British stranger had carried out the injunction imposed upon him by his friend, who had been there and ought to know.

One of those whom I came to know very soon after my arrival in New York was Horace Greeley, the editor and principal owner of that great journal the 'New York Tribune.' Greeley was in every way one of the most remarkable and also one of the oddest men I ever knew. He was a kind of modern and eccentric Benjamin Franklin. He had fought his way up from a very humble position — the son of a poor farmer, and had worked as a printer — to be the ruler of a great paper and one of the chiefs of a great party; and indeed, one of the most influential men in the United States. He had a great, shiny broad forehead, his eyes adorned by a pair of vast spectacles, a large, almost entirely bald head, a clean-shaven fleshy face — a face that, including baldness, spectacles, good-natured smile, and keen shrewd humour of expression, reminded me in an odd sort of way of Count Cavour, the famous Italian statesman. Greeley was a much worse dressed man than even Count Cavour. Cavour was quite aware of his own unconquerable indifference as to dress, and had therefore provided that his tailor must furnish him at stated intervals with a new suit of clothes made exactly after the same pattern as the old suit. But Horace Greeley disdained any such prudent precautions: he simply ordered a new garment when the old one was falling to pieces, and took no further trouble about the matter. He was an austere teetotaller, although he made no objection (as Wendell Phillips did, and many advocates of temperance whom I have

known) to attending a dinner-party where wine was drunk by other men. Horace Greeley once amused his friends and the public by writing all unconsciously of the evil example given by men who ought to know better, and who drank at dinner-parties their 'cliquots and their champagnes.' When joked with on the subject, Horace simply explained that he always thought 'cliquot' was one sort of drink and champagne quite another. He lived in modest apartments in the neighbourhood of Union Square, New York, with his wife and two daughters; and he had a pleasant country home in a picturesque region not far from the city. He was very fond of his country home and very proud of his farming operations; and his friends were fond of telling all manner of stories about the odd and simple ways in which his self-conceit as a farmer often displayed itself. One story was to the effect that when taken to task on the subject of profit he had told a friend triumphantly of a splendid crop of fruit which he had brought to maturity by his own personal care, and for which he recounted the exact prices he received when he sent the fruit to market. 'Talk about profit,' he said, in a tone of manly self-gratulation, 'how often do you hear of profit like that on a crop of fruit?' His friend, however, who was something of a sceptic, persisted in asking embarrassing questions about the value of the land, the cost of the plants, the time occupied in planting and pruning, in rearing and transporting, and so on; and he found at last, without any surprise, that Greeley had reckoned as profit all the money he received in the market, and had taken no account whatever of land, planting, labour, and time. Certain it was that Greeley's personal pride was much more in his farming than in the really commanding position he had won for himself

in the newspaper world and in the world of politics. Even I myself, knowing nothing of farming, was able to observe with a curious amusement how the shrewd, sly farmers of his own neighbourhood used to come about him at public gatherings and profess to treat him, not only as one of themselves, but as a sort of leader and king among farmers; and used to consult him about sowing and planting and reaping and seasons, and pretended to look up to him with eyes of admiration and of reverence as to some authorised instructor, and used to cast quiet side glances now and then at each other to accentuate the elaborate joke.

Horace Greeley was at the same time one of the very simplest and one of the very ablest men I have ever known. His intellect within its own sphere was originating, broad, and keen. He was absolutely without affectation, just as he was absolutely without any selfish or ignoble purpose. He lived in the heart of one of the most speculating and money-making communities on the earth, and he never cared in the least about money, never could be induced to go one step out of his way to make money, hardly ever knew indeed whether he had money at the time or whether he had not. It was well said of him that whereas other public men were usually ready to back their money with their opinions, Horace Greeley, as a journalist, was always ready to back his opinions with his money. If he were advocating some cause which he believed to be rightful, and his advocacy of such a cause began to affect the money-making power of the 'Tribune,' he went his way all the same and maintained his opinion whether it brought loss or brought gain. In the simplicity of his nature and the absolute integrity of his character he reminded me especially of two men whom I had known, and who, un-

like each other in most ways, were very much like each other in these ways — Father Mathew, the great Irish apostle of temperance, and John Bright. I saw much of Horace Greeley during my first stay in America; I visited him often at his town residence and at his country home; and came to have many intimate talks with him. He was sometimes very abrupt in manner, and often took narrow views of public questions, and made but scanty allowance for the peculiarities of some public men; but there was a temper of cheery kindliness under all his occasional asperity of criticism and of manner. He was constantly making speeches on platforms, and although he had no gift whatever of genuine eloquence, yet he made himself always interesting to an intelligent audience by the keen shrewdness of his criticisms and the odd humour of his phrases and his illustrations. He often reminded me of Thiers the great French statesman, though there was little else in the one man to remind anybody of the other, because of the manner in which he could hold a great audience during a long discourse without any charm of imagination or picturesque style, or musical voice, or effective gesture, or commanding attitude. I can easily imagine someone contending on æsthetic grounds that Thiers was positively a bad speaker, and yet finding himself wholly unable to leave the room so long as Thiers kept on addressing the audience. I can quite imagine the same thing being said of Horace Greeley, and the same admitted impossibility of leaving any public hall while he was speaking from its platform.

Many famous public men have written a bad hand; but Horace Greeley's was the worst writing I ever saw from the hand of any famous public man. New York State, at the time I speak of, was full of stories real or

imagined, about the odd effects produced now and then by Greeley's penmanship. According to one legend, Greeley happened to be for a time the chairman of a local railway company, and he had occasion to send to a clerk in one of the offices a written notice of dismissal. Greeley wrote this brief document with his own hand; and it was duly delivered to the clerk, who used it for months after as a free pass along the line of railway. He had only to go to any station, present the document, mention that it was a free pass from Mr. Greeley, and wait for its perusal. The official who saw it was able to make out the familiar signature, but could not hope to decipher the two or three lines of writing in the body of the document, and naturally assumed that it must be all right, and allowed the bearer to pass along to his seat in the railway cars.

It was strange indeed to find such a man as Horace Greeley in the centre of such a community as that of New York; a man with the appearance and, indeed, the manners of a simple country farmer, yet recognised as a power in the making and the unmaking of Presidents and Governments; a man with the simplicity of a child and the far-seeing shrewdness of a statesman; a man totally indifferent to money and social rank and display of any kind, and yet fond of amusement and easily amused; a man whom anybody might take in where the ordinary affairs of life were concerned, and who could see at a glance through any sham, could pierce through any craft where politics and statesmanship were engaged; a figure that would have been strange enough, one might fancy, even in the New England of the Pilgrim Fathers, and might have been thought almost impossible in the New York of the other day. I have never seen quite such a figure anywhere else, and am glad, in

every sense, to have known Horace Greeley. One day I met him in Broadway, and we stopped and talked together. He told me that some one had unexpectedly left him what seemed, according to his modest ideas, a considerable sum of money; and he added that he had already got rid of it. He told me of some benevolent projects in which he had a strong faith, but had had no means of assisting by the advance of any funds, and he had bestowed the money in that way, and was now rid of it. 'I am glad to have had it,' he said, 'and I am glad that it is gone'; and then he added, with an odd, bright smile, 'the past is always secure.' I have thought of the words many times since that day; I have little doubt that the benevolent enterprise, whatever it was, turned out a dead failure; I had no faith in Horace Greeley's gift of making such enterprises succeed; but he had done his best, and 'the past is always secure.' I am glad to have known Horace Greeley and to be able to remember his odd sayings, his quaint kindnesses, his keen criticisms, his humorous illustrations, his Spartan austerity of life, yet his thoroughly Greek sense of enjoyment and amusement, the astonishing contradictions of his wonderful nature. I am glad to have known him: 'the past is always secure.'

There were many hospitable New York houses open to me at that time. There was, for example, the house of my dear old friend Cyrus Field in Gramercy Park, a sort of segment of South Kensington set in the heart of New York. Cyrus Field gave bright and interesting dinner-parties, at which one was sure to meet men and women of distinction, and great receptions on many evenings. Towards the end of my first visit to the States he entertained the British Commissioners sent out to settle the terms of the Geneva Convention which

was to arrange for the disposal of the 'Alabama' claims — Lord Ripon, Sir Stafford Northcote (as he then was: afterwards Lord Iddesleigh), and Mr. Mountague Bernard, of Oxford. Next door to Mr. Cyrus Field lived his brother David Dudley Field, whom the late Lord Cairns described as one who had done more for the reform of law than any other living man; and at Dudley Field's house, too, one was lucky enough to meet with many distinguished men, Americans and foreigners. There was a good deal of literary and artistic culture in New York just then, and there were some houses specially devoted to the reception of authors and journalists, poets and painters, travellers and scientific men. I have already mentioned Mr. Bryant and Dr. Ripley as hosts who went in for the welcome of cultured people in especial. The Rev. Henry M. Field, another brother of Cyrus Field, had a house farther up town and nearer to Central Park, where one was always sure of meeting men and women of literary and artistic taste. The literary woman was just then beginning to come out in American life, and when she was not strong-minded and did not go in too much for women's rights, she was often a very graceful and fascinating presence in any assembly. Professor Vincenzo Botta, an Italian exile, who bore a name honoured in science, and had settled down to university teaching in New York, kept open house with his wife for all distinguished strangers and all residents whom the distinguished strangers would probably care to meet. I must not fail to mention the Sunday evening receptions of the two poet sisters, Alice and Phœbe Cary, who always brought to their modest home in the Madison Square neighbourhood a gathering of intellectual men and women whom it was a pleasure to meet. I recall to memory with

peculiar gratification those quiet gatherings in the home of these two poetical and intellectual women, where everything was so quiet, so unostentatious, so lighted by a peculiar and a gracious charm — a sort of refined and purified Bohemia which 'shoddy' would not care to enter, and the seeker after social rank would utterly fail to appreciate. I do not know whether there are many or any literary and artistic circles now in New York, such as there were when I first made the acquaintance of the great city. More than ten years have passed since I last saw New York, and even at the time of that visit I fancied that the literary circles there, as in London, were getting to be swallowed up in 'the blind wave' of society 'feeling round its long sea hall.' I do not think I have ever known a brighter, wholesomer, more cultured, more unaffected Bohemia than that which I found in the New York of my early residence. Some of those whom I used to know there at that time were more famous then than they are now; some have grown into greater distinction and celebrity with the growing years. One of the young men whom I used to meet most often then — and a singularly handsome and charming young man he was — has been since that time ambassador to Paris, and was sent over to London as special ambassador in 1897, the year of the Queen's Jubilee — I mean, of course, Mr. Whitelaw Reid. I have followed Mr. Reid's progress as a journalist and as a diplomatist with the deepest interest and I hope and believe that the friendship begun in those distant days has not vanished with the vanishing years.

One man I may mention as a part of my recollections of New York, although his personal history belongs much more to Boston — Mr. Wendell Phillips, the great orator of negro emancipation, and, indeed, of

every noble and philanthropic cause. I made the acquaintance of Wendell Phillips first in New York, whither he used to come often to make speeches and deliver lectures. In the lecture world of America he was probably on the whole the most brilliant and successful lecturer. He was, indeed, one of the very finest public speakers it was ever my good fortune to hear; I rank him with Bright and Gladstone. He had a noble presence, a clear-cut, intellectual, statuesque face, and a voice capable of reaching the farthest corner of the greatest public assembly, and capable, too, of responding to every emotion of humour, of pathos, or sarcasm, or passion which stirred the speaker's soul. Wendell Phillips seemed to me to combine the rushing fluency of Gladstone with the clear simplicity of Bright. He had different styles for different subjects and different audiences; he could deliver a literary lecture that sparkled all through with gems of phraseology and humour and descriptive illustration, and such a discourse he threw off in an easy, apparently unpremeditated way, as if he were merely thinking aloud for the instruction and delight of his audience. But when from some political platform he addressed himself to a great cause which commanded all his sympathies and called for all his energy, then his voice could ring out like a trumpet, and the very soul of the man seemed to stir the whole assembly. I paid him once, all unintentionally and unconsciously, the highest tribute it was in my power to bestow. I had often heard him deliver lectures, but I had never heard him make a really great speech on one of his own especial subjects until I went to attend a meeting which was held to celebrate the passing of that amendment to the Constitution which secured a man against being precluded from the right

to vote because of the colour of his skin. I was a little late in getting to the meeting, and the vast hall was already packed with listeners; I could only get standing room on a staircase, from which I could not see the platform or any of the speakers. Presently a powerful voice filled the hall, and I soon became carried away by a flood of noble eloquence, the like of which I had not heard since some of the most splendid efforts of Bright or Gladstone. I could not help whispering to my wife, who was with me: 'Why, this man is a greater speaker than Wendell Phillips.' It was, in fact, Wendell Phillips himself, whom I had not, before that time, had a chance of hearing at his very best. I have always thought it — selfishly thought it, perhaps — a pity that fortune did not place Phillips in the House of Commons. How he would have sustained the cause of Gladstone, and rivalled the eloquence of Bright, and outsatirised the satire of Disraeli, and answered with pitiless sarcasm the sarcasms of Robert Lowe.

Wendell Phillips never sought or would accept a seat in Congress. His nature shrank from the political preliminaries which would have to be gone through before such a position could be obtained. He was not a politician in the American sense of the word, and he was not in any sense of the words a party man. He was devoted to certain great public principles, and for them alone he fought. He was a man of private fortune, with the taste of a highly cultured gentleman, and he gave up his whole active life to the advocacy of his principles. I have never known anywhere a more absolutely unselfish and patriotic citizen. Many people called him a fanatic, and of course his total indifference to the chances of the mere political game would have made him seem a fanatic in the eyes of many men. He

was, no doubt, a fanatical devotee of the cause of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks. As I have already mentioned, he would not even attend a dinner-party where any of the guests drank wine. 'Is it not a pity,' I once asked of Emerson, 'that Wendell Phillips carries his principle so far, and will not come and join his friends because there is wine upon the table?' 'Well,' replied Emerson, with his sweet and thoughtful smile, 'let us give him, at all events, the credit of his hair shirt.' Sometimes, in the very passion of his principles, he used exaggerated and even extravagant phrases, which made some quiet people lose their tempers with him. He hated — justly hated, as I think — all wars of aggression, wars of mere conquest, wars for the annexation of new territory. If he had lived in our time he would have been the most unrelenting and the most powerful anti-Jingo in the English-speaking world. He once in an impassioned speech described the forward movement of the Anglo-Saxon race, including his own Americans in the description, as 'a drunken revel of blood.' This was at a time when a sudden mania for the acquisition of new territory at any cost seemed to have taken possession of some of the civilised races. I do not by any means intend to say that the description could be morally or scientifically justified; but I have sometimes thought that some being in a higher sphere might have made more allowance for the fervour of the expression than was made by many of the critics of Wendell Phillips.

I have said that I made the acquaintance of Wendell Phillips for the first time in New York, and it came about in this way. I had settled down by that time as a resident in the St. Denis Hotel on Broadway, where I remained for more than a year, and this happened to

be the hotel where Wendell Phillips always stayed when he visited New York. I had, therefore, many opportunities of meeting him, and talking with him and interchanging ideas. Wendell Phillips had visited England and was well acquainted with our great cities, and took much delight in observing English ways. I remember one day he received a visit in the public room of the hotel from a man whom I had known during my boyish days in the south of Ireland — Frederick Douglass, a coloured man, who had been a slave and had escaped from slavery and won high repute as an orator on emancipation. I can well remember how on the appearance of Frederick Douglass as a visitor at the St. Denis Hotel a number of the American ladies seated in the room gathered up their skirts and indignantly walked out. Some of them I knew to be Southern ladies; but even when we make every allowance for the prejudice of early habitude it still seems a strange thing that so lately in the history of the world, women supposed to be educated should flounce out of a room simply because a man known to be of negro extraction had come into it. A little later on I happened to be with my wife in the drawing-room of an hotel in Charleston in South Carolina, where several ladies were seated. The commandant of the Federal garrison did us the honour to pay us a visit, and he came into the room in his ordinary uniform. Thereupon the Southern ladies rose from their chairs, shook their skirts and made a stampede out of the apartment. This perhaps, however, was not so surprising as the other demonstration. South Carolina was the leading State in the outbreak of the Southern rebellion; and the presence of the Federal commandant was, of course, only a living evidence of defeat. One might, therefore, excuse the

Southern ladies for their display of patriotic rancour, remembering that such displays were common enough in the Venetia and Lombardy of the old days before Solferino. But I think the ladies in the St. Denis Hotel, New York, might have kept their seats, even though Frederick Douglass, a coloured man, did come into the room as the guest of Wendell Phillips. Douglass was a thoroughly educated man — self-educated no doubt, all the more to his credit — and the ladies who would not sit in the room with him would have politely received a cup of coffee from a negro if he came in the discharge of his duties as a waiter. Wendell Phillips took no notice of the occurrence, but went on with his conversation just as if nothing had happened.

I cannot close this chapter of my New York reminiscences without saying something about a man who could only fitly come in immediately after Wendell Phillips, for the sake of sheer contrast, and, indeed, the force of contrast could no farther go. I was on several occasions brought into personal and passing acquaintanceship with the once notorious James or Jim Fisk, as he was commonly called. I wonder if the British reader in general retains now any recollection of the Jim Fisk whose name was once only too well known all over the civilised world. Fisk was the very first of the race of gambling speculators who make and squander fortunes whom it ever was my lot to meet in life. He was probably the first of the class of speculator who combined a certain passion for theatric display and a kind of semi-artistic mountebankery with the passion for making and losing money. I had met in my earliest London days the once famous George Hudson, the 'Railway King,' as he used to be called; and he was perhaps the first great speculator of modern times. But Hudson made

money for the sake of making money and of obtaining social influence, and when he had made a fortune, he had no other tastes to gratify than those which consisted in giving great entertainments and seeing people of rank gathered round his dinner-table. Fisk was a man of a totally different order; he speculated and gambled, floated companies, schemed out railway lines and lines of steamers, but he had a passion for display and for splash which led him into eccentricities that almost excused themselves by their suggestion of madness. He was, when I knew him and when he had reached the height of his fame, still a young man, and might have been a handsome man but for his tendency to corpulence. He loved to wear the uniform of a naval officer; he had a splendid steam yacht which he navigated as though it were a vessel of war; and he delighted in being addressed by his friends as Admiral Fisk. He was a man of great natural ability, with a genius for speculation which might have left some enduring remains behind it, if it had not been constantly thwarted by a passion for mere novelty of enterprise. He took it into his head once to become the owner of a theatre, and he made himself the possessor of the Grand Opera House in New York, which he delighted to control with his own managerial skill. He brought some of the best companies of actors there from the States and from Europe; and just as it made him happy in one mood to believe himself a professional admiral, so it made him happy in another mood to regard himself as a professional manager. But he had a higher and loftier ambition than all this — an ambition which the quarter-deck of a Nelson or the mere managerial skill of a Henry Irving could not of itself have gratified. That ambition was to play the part of Hamlet. When he became

the master of the Grand Opera House he had at last the means of giving his heart's ambition its chance. He did play the part of Hamlet. He was too modest, however, to expose his untried genius to the criticism of the ordinary public; so he issued invitations to all his friends and acquaintances and to all whom his friends and acquaintances wished him to invite to come to the theatre on a certain night and see his first performance of Hamlet. The friends and acquaintances and their friends and acquaintances were further invited to a gorgeous supper — everybody knew it would be a gorgeous supper, the adjective did not appear in the invitation — after the fall of the curtain on the dead body of the Prince of Denmark. The performance was not a success, not even a *succès d'estime*, favourably disposed though the audience undoubtedly was. The Prince of Denmark this time was too fat and too scant of breath — and the rest was silence. But I think we must give Jim Fisk the credit of his one artistic ambition: there was something at all events of originality in it. I never heard that Mr. Jabez Balfour was possessed by any desire to play Hamlet, and I have not heard of Mr. Hooley's having issued any invitations to his friends to see what he could make of Shakespeare's most trying part.

Poor Jim Fisk ended his life tragically, although not in Hamlet-like tragedy. He was shot in a quarrel on the stairs of one of the New York hotels by a man who had once been a friend of his; and the quarrel, rumour or scandal said at the time, had to do with that most direful cause of quarrel before and after the days of Helen. Fisk had a great deal of absurd cleverness in him, and even a certain force of literary expression, for which most people would not have been inclined to

give him credit. A phrase of his which I heard of at the time it was uttered, has lived in my memory ever since. He was giving evidence, I think before a Committee of one of the Houses of Congress, about some great financial enterprise which had suddenly broken down. 'I saw,' he said, 'that the time had come for every man to drag his own corpse out.' I have heard some kindly things told of Jim Fisk. He had sprung from the poorest beginnings, a ballad which was popular in New York during the zenith of his notoriety declared that in his early days

> You used to peddle buttons, Jim,
> At seven for a cent.

He came from Brattleboro in the State of Vermont, and there in his happier days he made comfortable provision for his old father and set him up in a home secured against all the ups and downs of speculative financial enterprise. We have not, I think, had quite a Jim Fisk, so far, in our British speculative world; but we have had some speculators who were just as reckless and unscrupulous as he, and who were certainly a good deal less original and amusing.

CHAPTER XI

BOSTON'S LITERARY MEN

My first impression when I visited Boston was that I felt myself rather at home in the place. It seemed to me somehow like a miniature London. Beacon Street, with the common on one side, carried with it the idea of Piccadilly with the Green Park. The streets were sometimes narrow and crooked (quite unlike the avenues of New York), and there were many dear delightful little lanes and courts and alleys with old-fashioned comfortable-looking hotels and restaurants which brought with them a sort of familiar air, as if one were wandering through certain quarters in the neighbourhood of Fleet Street and Ludgate Hill. Tremont Street itself looked to me as if it might well have been stolen somehow from the dear old City. At the time of which I am now speaking Boston had not got its new fashionable avenues with their double rows of palatial residences, and its modern Paris-like hotels, and the whole place had an air of old-world comfort and unpretentiousness about it. Then, of course, the name of Boston was loved by every traveller who had any concern with literature, because it was more or less associated up to that time with whatever of literature the American Republic had to show. I came with some letters of introduction, and it was not long before I had the pleasure of making many acquaintances whose

names were as well known in the Old World as in the New. James T. Fields, the head of a great Boston publishing house, had a home which was a centre of attraction to literary people from the States and from abroad; and in his pleasant house I met most of his celebrated American friends, men and women. I have always felt in later years that Boston was a very different place to me when James Fields and so many of his friends and companions had passed away. One of the first distinguished Americans whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making in Massachusetts was James Russell Lowell, afterwards one of the most popular men in London society, of those who filled the office of American Minister to the Court of St. James. Lowell, at the time I speak of, had little idea indeed of ever being sent to occupy such a post, and seemed to have no ambition or inclination tending that way. He was a professor at the university of Harvard, and had his home in the town of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and was not a very frequent visitor to Boston itself. As James Fields said to me of him, Lowell was so fond of the song of the birds at Cambridge that he could not easily be prevailed upon to spend any time in the city. His name was familiar to all lovers of literature in England, and, indeed, all over the world where books written in English were read. I think he was best known to what I will call the outer public in England by his immortal 'Biglow Papers'; his essays and his poems were read and appreciated only by a select few. Indeed, so gifted and accomplished a poet as Algernon Charles Swinburne once said to me that he did not regard Lowell as a man actually compelled by genius and nature to write poems, and that from no man not thus compelled could genuine

poetry come. I did not agree with the opinion, at least with that part which referred to Lowell, then, and I do not agree with it now, but certainly about that time Hosea Biglow was for most Englishmen the creator of Lowell's fame. I remember once attending an annual dinner of the Cobden Club, at Greenwich, where Mr. John Bigelow, then American Minister at Paris, was among the distinguished guests. Mr. Bigelow was called upon to respond to a toast, and one of the company who was seated near me made manifestations of intense interest. 'Hush!' he said sharply, rebuking all hum of conversation, 'I want to hear this man more than any other; I do so admire his "Biglow Papers."' To return, however, to Boston, I may say that I received a very kindly invitation from Lowell, asking me to visit him at his house in Cambridge; and it is needless to add that I was delighted to go there, and that I spent a day or two not likely to be forgotten. It was, indeed, a delightful experience to be shown over the Harvard buildings, and over Cambridge and its walks and drives, by such a companion as Lowell, who could make every by-way and corner of the place alive with historical association and poetical imagining.

Lowell, it is hardly necessary to say, was intimately acquainted with English literature, and, indeed, with the literature of most European countries; and I am satisfied that it would not have been easy to find in the Cambridge at home anyone who had a more complete knowledge of the great English classics. If we happened to talk of some book, English or continental, Lowell was sure to go to one of the shelves of his library and take down the volume, and turn to some passage which bore upon the subject of our talk, and expatiate on it with all the fresh delight of one who loved it so

well that he could find something new to charm him in its most familiar lines. He had a wonderful gift of conversation, and his discourse was all conversation, and not talk; at least, he did not talk at his listeners or stream away as if he were pouring out words for talking sake. I have heard men more brilliant in conversation than Lowell; but I have heard no man who seemed more gifted by nature with the happy faculty which can respond to the thoughts of his hearers, and bring out their best thoughts in answer to his own. I remember that he once began to tell me by chance of some rare and precious gift of wine that had been sent to him — wine the value of which it would be hardly possible to estimate by any extravagance set out in a price list; and then he wandered on to descant upon the impossibility of such a treasure being adequately appreciated by a quiet literary worker like himself, and on this thread of idea he hung so many curious conceits, such gems of phrase, such chaplets of fancy, that we seemed to have iridescent bubbles of fantasy sent floating before our eyes and before our minds by every chance breath from the worker of the magic. At Lowell's house I met for the first time a young man — he was then a very young man — of whom Lowell thought highly, and for whom he predicted a brilliant future. The prediction has been well fulfilled; for the young man of those days is Mr. W. D. Howells, whose writings are as popular on our side of the Atlantic as on the other, and who has indeed created a new school of fiction for the delight of all novel readers, and for the imitation of some novel writers.

I had many opportunities of meeting Lowell during my early visits to Boston, and afterwards when he came to London merely as a traveller; and still later when

he was settled in London for some time as American Minister here. I admired him always; but I may be forgiven if I say that I admired him most in his own home, and amid his own familiar surroundings at Cambridge, Massachusetts. It seemed to me that I understood him best under such conditions, perhaps because I had for so many years come to associate him with the poets and scholars and essayists, the workers and the dreamers who made that corner of the United States so dear and so fascinating to admirers in the old country. Lowell was, as everybody knows, one of the most popular American Ministers who ever came to London. London society thoroughly appreciated him, welcomed him, 'went for' him with homage and rapture, did all it could to spoil him with praise and social flattery, but could not prevent him from being the poetical, fanciful, dreamy Lowell of the college halls, and the homes and the lanes of Cambridge. Indeed, Lowell developed in London a gift of which, so far as I know, he had not given any clear evidence at home. He became one of the most delightful and fascinating after-dinner speakers I have ever heard. I rank him second, and only second, to Charles Dickens as an after-dinner speaker. He never said anything which was not fresh, original, and striking; he made the most commonplace theme sparkle with fancy and humour, with exquisite phrase and poetic suggestiveness. I think the famous old illustration about the orator receiving in a vapour from his audience that which he gives back as a flood would have applied admirably to Lowell, for it seemed to me that the manifest delight of his London audiences had the effect of making him a great after-dinner speaker as he went along. Yet I cannot help saying again that I liked him best as I knew him first;

that the Lowell of Cambridge, Massachusetts, was more to me the real Lowell, the poet and the critic, the moralist, the thinker, and the dreamer, than the Lowell of London society, the Lowell of London public dinners, and fashionable dinner-parties, and fashionable drawing-rooms.

During my first stay in Boston Lowell wrote a delightful article in the 'Atlantic Monthly,' entitled 'On a certain Condescension in Foreigners.' The article put in a humorous, satirical, but by no means ill-natured form, some of Lowell's objections to the patronising manner in which some of the visitors from England, especially the literary visitors, were disposed to treat the institutions and the men and women of the United States. Lowell did not particularly object to the open and avowed caricaturists. He, like most of his countrymen, had inherited little or nothing of the temper of resentment which Mrs. Trollope had aroused by her pictures and her strictures; he was too great an admirer of the genius of Dickens to take much to heart the extravagances of the 'American Notes' and of 'Martin Chuzzlewit.' But what he did object to was the patronising style, the pitying, pardoning style which more recent English writers had adopted; the style which seemed to say that really these poor Americans are not by any means so absurd as some of our countrymen have made them out; they are doing very well on the whole, and we must make allowance and not expect too much of finished work from the 'prentice hand. Readers of to-day, who cannot carry their memories back for thirty years, would find it hard to understand what a sort of undiscovered country the American States seemed to be to the average Englishman of that time, and might fail to realise the existence of that certain condescension

in foreigners which Lowell bantered with such keen but genial satire. I have often wondered whether Lowell noticed how much times had changed when he began to find himself the favourite lion of London society. It was not with a certain condescension of any kind that London greeted Lowell, but with a genuine admiration and enthusiasm. I may say that I have heard some grumbling Americans insist that Lowell's head was a little turned by the welcome which London society offered to him; and that he seemed less anxious than might have been expected to meet every demand made upon him by his own countrymen travelling in England. But I know well enough that an American Minister or an American Ambassador, as the position now is, finds it no easy task to gratify all the requirements of the more exacting among his countrymen and countrywomen, and there would be sure to be some grumbling in any case. It is, however, one of life's little ironies, if I may use again my friend Thomas Hardy's often quoted phrase, that the author of the article 'On a certain Condescension in Foreigners' should have been complained of by some of his own countrymen because he assumed in his own person the supposed condescension, as if it belonged to him by Divine Right.

During the first few days of my stay in Boston I was much gratified by receiving the following letter: —

'CONCORD, Sunday, March 20th.

'DEAR SIR, — I am glad to hear of your arrival in Boston, and grateful for your and Mrs. McCarthy's kind intention to come and see me. But I cannot allow you to give yourselves this dull journey at this moment when the country is full of melting snows, and when

it happens that my invalid wife is for the time deserted by all her children.

'I shall probably be in the city to-morrow and shall endeavour to pay my respects to you. Meantime I will beg you, Sir, to keep yourself free from any engagement on Saturday afternoon next, that you may be my guest at the Saturday Club; we dine at 2.30 P.M. at the Parker House, and usually collect some good men.

'With great regard,

'R. W. EMERSON.

'JUSTIN MCCARTHY, Esq.'

I need hardly say that I accepted the invitation with the greatest delight. I had heard of the Boston Saturday Club when at home in London, and I knew that it gathered together at its entertainments all that was best and brightest among the men who made Boston a literary centre. I was actually staying in the Parker House where the dinner was to take place; and on the morning of the particular day I had the honour of receiving a visit from Emerson. He came, in his kindly, friendly way, to show me some of the literary and artistic institutions of Boston, which, as a mere stranger, I might have failed to discover so soon. We went through picture galleries and sculpture galleries and libraries, and into old book shops, and we talked of all manner of subjects by the way. What first struck me and charmed me in Emerson's conversation was the absence of any of that sort of air which we are apt to associate with the professor of a certain school of thought who always seems to be discoursing to his disciples. Emerson talked in the bright easy way of a man of the world, and discoursed of men and things as well as of books and transcendental theories. He had not long before been visiting Europe; and he had a strong friendship for

many English writers, especially for Carlyle. He spoke with great regret of the course Carlyle had taken as regarded the American Civil War; but he spoke kindly, tenderly, and lovingly, in the manner of one who could not bring himself to judge harshly the intellectual error of a friend. I spoke to him of Walt Whitman, the talk I had had with Bryant on the same subject recurring to my mind. I knew that Emerson had been the first great patron of Whitman, if one could use the word patron in describing the influence exercised by a man of Emerson's simple exalted nature. Emerson told me that he had had and still retained a strong faith in Whitman as possibly the first poet to spring straight from the American soil without foreign graft or culture of any kind. But he explained that Whitman had an artistic creed of his own, which it was difficult for anyone else to accept — a creed which denied the right of artistic exclusiveness, and even of artistic selection — a creed which held that everything that was found in nature was entitled to a place in art. I believe that Whitman carried this theory so far as to startle and shock in ordinary conversation those who were not yet quite prepared to admit that art may frankly and undisguisedly deal with everything that it finds existing in life. Emerson spoke with gentle amused deprecation of Whitman's theory, but frankly owned that it made Whitman almost an impossibility for ordinary social life.

The Saturday Club, as we have seen, dined early — this was the Boston of a great many years ago — and I may assume, with that certain condescension which Lowell noticed in foreigners, that it has changed its hours before this time. Never have I had a more delightful dinner. Longfellow was there and Oliver Wendell Holmes, and amongst the stranger guests was

Charles Fechter, the great actor who had just been delighting and astonishing the artistic world of London. Longfellow I had met already, and had received from him a cordial invitation to pay him a visit at his home in Cambridge. After the dinner some of the company, among whom was Oliver Wendell Holmes, did me the favour to come to my rooms for some further talk. The dinner itself I should say was delightful; there was no formality about it, there were no toasts and no speeches; it was simply a gathering of friends brought together by a common love for literature and art and science, and by an ever-youthful capacity for social enjoyment which defied the chilling process of years. I dined with the Saturday Club on other occasions also, and met for the most part the same circle of friends, with the addition usually of some stranger from Europe, who made a congenial figure at such a gathering. I had many opportunities of meeting Emerson, and never met him without a certain curious feeling of wonder that a man of his profound thought and of an intellect which might have seemed to be lifted so much above the ordinary concerns of life could bring himself so readily into the most unaffected congeniality of companionship with everyday men like myself. The last time I ever saw him is filled with the most melancholy recollections for me. I am passing over a large number of years at a step to come to a visit which I paid to Emerson the last time he was in Europe. He was then staying in one of the hotels in the Waterloo Place region, and was quite broken in health. His memory had long begun to fail him. I had heard of his sinking health, but did not know that it had sunk so far, or I would not have thought of disturbing him by the useless ceremony of a visit. His daughter was with him; and he received

me with all the old friendliness of manner and with an evident desire to show that he was friendly, and that he had not forgotten me. I asked, rather unluckily, after one or two of the friends I had made in Boston — men of celebrity who belonged to Emerson's own most intimate circle; and I soon found that their names conveyed to him no manner of idea. His daughter showed the most tender address in at once acting as his interpreter and not allowing him to see that there was any need for such an office. Later still I visited Concord in Massachusetts, after Emerson had left the living world. It seemed only like an act of friendly devotion and piety to look upon the place again after it had become his grave.

I have mentioned that I received a kindly invitation to Longfellow's house at Cambridge; and of course I accepted it. It was not the only invitation of the same kind which I received and accepted from Longfellow. The poet was then in the very prime, if I may use such an expression, of a hale old age. He carried his years well; there was nothing of the aging man in his looks or his manner or his talk, or seemingly in his nature. His was, indeed, the very youth of old age. He showed me all sorts of drawings and paintings and curiosities which he had gathered around him during his travels in Europe, and on which he expatiated with a genuine artistic zest. He had but lately been in England, and had been entertained at a sort of semi-public dinner in London, where, I believe, he was actually compelled to make a speech. Longfellow's Boston friends used to say that he was the only American citizen born since the Declaration of Independence who positively could not make a speech on any subject. I am not, therefore, rash enough to affirm that he did make a speech at the

London dinner; I can only say it was believed at the time that his admirers had actually prevailed upon him to deliver an after-dinner oration. But, as a talker in the ordinary intercourse of private life, Longfellow was a fitting companion for Emerson, and even for Wendell Holmes. At the time when I first visited him in his Cambridge home he told me that he had lately had the good fortune to meet George Eliot, and that he was charmed with the friendly ease of her conversation. Like many another stranger, he had expected to find in the great English novelist a woman of cold, rigid, and self-assertive manner; and he was most agreeably disappointed. I told him in the course of our talk how much I and many of my friends owed to him for the art with which he had brought us into sympathy and intellectual companionship with some of the minor German poets. I told him that in my boyish days and in my Irish home the translations which he had given in 'Hyperion' first taught us to appreciate Uhland and Salis and Chamisso, and many another German poet whom we might never have thought out for ourselves. I went a good deal farther than that, however, for I boldly challenged some of the opinions which he had expressed in 'Hyperion' about certain of Goethe's 'Roman Elegies.' Longfellow at first declared it utterly out of the question that he could have disparaged the 'Roman Elegies'; he confessed that he had not read his own book for many years; but he still could not understand how or why he could then have found fault with poems for which at the time of our talk he had the highest admiration. I told him that if I had the book I could find him the passage, and he said with a smile that he had no doubt a copy of 'Hyperion' could be found in the house. So the volume was brought, and I opened

it and showed him the passage; and then the poet, having read over the sentences, frankly 'owned up,' admitted that he was wrong at the time he penned the condemnation, or at all events declared that he had entirely changed his opinion since then — 'took it all back,' to adopt a modern American colloquialism which was not in use at the time of the talk with Longfellow — and Goethe triumphed all along the line.

I had many meetings with Longfellow during the time of my first stay in America, and the general impression I derived from my intercourse with him was that the man, on the whole, was greater than his books. Now, I am not sure that I can very clearly describe what I should wish to convey, and what is in my own mind upon this subject. I am old-fashioned enough to be still an admirer of Longfellow's poetry, and of "Hyperion," and of "Outre-Mer." I am told that this is not the right sort of thing to say at the present moment; and I believe that to the immense popularity which Longfellow once enjoyed in England there has succeeded the familiar period of reaction, and that it is now thought the thing to cry him down as it was once thought the thing to cry him up. I do not, however, profess to be particularly bound by the laws of fashion in poetry, and I hold to it that Longfellow was, in his way and within his limits, a genuine poet. A stream is a stream though its flow be not broad or deep; and Longfellow's was a genuine stream of song. But what I desire to convey is that, if I had met Longfellow personally before I had read his poems and his prose books, and had had a chance of talking to him such as I did actually enjoy at various times, about nature and scenery and books and the impulses, thoughts, and deeds that inspire books, and about the life and the

heart of man, I should have expected to find in his printed works the stamp of a literary order higher than that to which, according to my judgment, the author attained.

I cannot close these few pages about Longfellow without quoting a letter — a kindly letter — which my wife received from him as we were just on the eve of a somewhat hurried voyage to England: —

'CAMBRIDGE, May 30, 1871.

MY DEAR MRS. MCCARTHY, — It gives me great pleasure to comply with your request, and to send you a photograph, signed and sealed and ready for its place in your album.

'But will it arrive in season? If you sail on Tuesday from Quebec you must be taking wing from New York to-morrow at the latest.

'I will accordingly direct this to Quebec, so that it may be handed to you on board the "Prussia."

'That will be as if I came to see you off, and to wish you a happy voyage, which I most heartily do.

'With kind regards to your husband, and all good wishes,

'Yours truly,

'HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

'P. S. — I see I have made a mistake. You sail on Saturday and not on Tuesday, so there is time enough; and this shall go to New York and not to Quebec.'

Many years after, I visited Cambridge again, and I actually was in Longfellow's house. But Longfellow was not there to greet me, and the companion of my former visits was not with me to greet him. The grave

had closed over both. That was a sort of melancholy pilgrimage rather than a visit to Longfellow's home.

Oliver Wendell Holmes seemed to have stepped into existence out of his own book, 'The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table,' or 'The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table' seemed to have formed the very being and soul of Oliver Wendell Holmes. I never knew an author and a book so thoroughly identified with one another. To hear Wendell Holmes talking one might have thought he was spinning new fanciful passages for his delightful book; and he could talk away upon any subject on the spur of the moment, and spin fancies about it and around it dreamily, as if he were an improvisatore playing with some congenial subject for the joy of an enraptured audience. Anything could set him talking if he was in a mood for talk, and yet he always seemed to be inspiring the talk of others rather than carrying on the discourse himself. I have met numbers of dull men who seemed to monopolise the conversation in a way that Wendell Holmes never did, and yet I have never heard a man who seemed more capable of holding a company in fascination by his talk. He did not seem to me to be so closely identified with any other of his books as with 'The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.' In 'Elsie Venner,' for instance, there are passages in which Holmes seems to have gone for the time out of his own individuality and found a peculiar and a bolder imagination. There was a world of kindliness in his tones and in the glances of his eyes, as there was in the pressure of his hand. After I came to know him I never could visit Boston, even for a few hours, without making it a sort of loving duty, a kind of sentimental journey, to find out that long walk on Boston Common which he has made immortal in his 'Autocrat of the

Breakfast Table,' and traversing its length in a sort of affectionate contemplation. Holmes told me once of a visit he had paid to London in former days, when, as he owned with all the sweet frankness of his nature, he was somewhat disappointed with the reception he got, even among literary people. 'Hardly anyone,' he said, 'seemed to know who he was, or to attach any clear idea to "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table."' If he really felt the comparative indifference with which he was then received in the English capital he must have been very amply compensated by the reception which London gave him on the occasion of his last visit, long after the time when I first made his acquaintance. During that last visit London society not merely welcomed him, but ran after him and rushed after him; he could not possibly have accepted one tithe of the invitations showered in upon him by his cordial admirers.

I can well remember when and how it was first borne in upon me that Oliver Wendell Holmes was really growing to be an old man. It was during the last visit that I ever paid to Boston, some ten or eleven years ago. Up to that time I had always regarded Holmes as a sort of walking, moving immortality: a being endowed with eternal youth; a being at all events who could never grow old. I had come to regard him much as we all of late years had come to regard Mr. Gladstone. One day, however, I was walking near the Boston post-office when I heard a rapid footfall behind me. There was something in the sound of that footfall which filled me with an inexplicable and a melancholy interest. It was the sound of an uncertain tread; it might have been the tread of a child only beginning to walk, or it might have been the tread of some very old person. Then I heard a voice calling my name, and I

turned round, and there was Wendell Holmes; and the truth was forced upon me that the 'Autocrat of the Breakfast Table' had grown very old. Yet the moment I began to talk with him my feelings all changed; he ceased to be old in a moment, and he was the same Wendell Holmes — the Wendell Holmes of former days, hale and brisk and full of high spirits, and radiant with the glow of an eternal youth. I went with my daughter to pay him a visit, and he took us about Boston to show us some curious old book shops and print shops which he loved to haunt. We had to go in various omnibuses and tramcars, and I was much amused and touched by the gallantry and the alertness of the ever-polite old cavalier. He would persist in handing my daughter in and out of every omnibus or tramcar made use of by us in our journeyings; he used to leap in and out with the agility of a young man, and give his courtly hand to my daughter as though he were some stalwart cavalier coming to the aid of weak girlhood. My daughter was a healthy and robust girl, who, one might have thought, was better fitted to help the old man than needful of his help; but Oliver Wendell Holmes never failed to lead the way for her, and to hold out to her his gallant protecting hand. After that visit to Boston I never saw Wendell Holmes again.

I have been somewhat discursive in these Boston reminiscences, and have jumped from one date to another, carried away by my recollections of the men rather than observing the order of the days. I will, therefore, continue them after the same fashion. I have already mentioned my first meeting with W. D. Howells at Lowell's house during my earliest stay in Boston. Let me recall some mementos of my latest meetings with him, many years after, when his name had become

famous through all the reading world. I publish the following kindly and genial letter which I received from him: —

'302 Beacon Street, Boston, September 21, 1886.

'Dear Mr. McCarthy, — I hope you have not forgotten me, who vividly remember the pleasure of meeting you at Mr. Lowell's when you were in the country before, for I have boasted to the members of the Tavern Club, of which I am unworthily president, that I knew you personally, and that I could use the influence of an old acquaintance in getting you to accept a dinner from them. The Tavern Club is made up of all the best and nicest young lawyers, doctors, artists, and *littérateurs* here, and we have entertained Lowell, Salvini, Irving, and others, at the simple dinners which our Italian artist makes for us; and now we want you, whom we love for yourself and your cause. You are to be in Boston early in October; won't you name some evening — *not* Friday, Saturday, or Sunday — when you will dine with us? Speeches brief, and no reporters.

'Yours sincerely,

'W. D. Howells.'

The dinner-party came off, and was not by any means the only pleasant gathering to which I was introduced by the courteous attentions of Mr. Howells. I have a grateful recollection of that Tavern Club dinner. The fare was good, the wines were good, the speeches were short, crisp, and sparkling, and there was an air of friendly comradeship throughout the whole evening which reminded me of some of the dead, unforgotten days of that better and artistic Bohemia which we once used to have in London. There was a keen cross-fire of conversational wit and humour at the Tavern Club

dinner; and I remember that we got into an animated discussion on Mr. Howells's favourite theory as to the sphere of the novel writer. I am not going to discuss the theory here; we have all considered it and argued about it, and made up our minds concerning it, and unmade them again many times since that day; and Mr. Howells's theory has at all events the advantage over many other theories, that its author was able himself to put it into practice and to make it a success. Perhaps Mr. Howells was inspired by his genius to take a certain course in the first instance, and then unconsciously developed the theory to suit the conditions of the achievement; but, anyhow, I know we had a charming argument, and passed a most delightful evening. Dixie, the clever American comedian, was there, and gave us some wonderful imitations of Henry Irving and other leaders of the drama — imitations that were not mere mimicries, but which positively created new parts for the performer, and showed us precisely how he would be sure to play them if they came within the range of his study. I have had many evenings of social and intellectual enjoyment in Boston, none more full of enjoyment than that evening at the Tavern Club dinner.

During my latest visit to America I became acquainted with a countryman of my own who had acquired political celebrity first and social celebrity afterwards. I may introduce him by an anecdote, for the truth of which, according to the newspaper phrase, I can vouch. At a literary gathering in Boston I met the late Lord Playfair, whom I had known well in London, especially during the years when he and I were members of the House of Commons together. Lord Playfair had married a Boston lady, and used to visit Boston with her every autumn. When I met him at the liter-

ary gathering of which I speak, he suddenly said to me, after some friendly talk: 'I wonder if you have yet made the acquaintance of the most charming man on the American continent.' 'Of course,' I promptly replied, 'you mean John Boyle O'Reilly?' 'Of course I do,' was the ready rejoinder; and then I told him that I had already made the acquaintance of that most charming man. Now, I am afraid it is quite possible that a considerable number of my English readers may not have the remotest idea as to who John Boyle O'Reilly was. Not very long before the time of which I am now speaking, O'Reilly's name came up during a debate in the House of Commons, and the then leader of that House frankly confessed that he did not remember ever having heard O'Reilly's name before. Lyon Playfair was then a member of the House of Commons, and he bore generous testimony to the character and the abilities of O'Reilly and to the position which he had made for himself in Boston and indeed all over the United States.

John Boyle O'Reilly was, to begin with, one of the handsomest and most finely made men I have ever seen; he was not tall, only just the middle height, but he was splendidly built for strength, and he was, indeed, a perfect master of all athletic exercises — at boxing, at fencing, boating, riding, shooting, running, swimming, he had few equals, even among the professional adepts of each particular craft. He was a poet; he was a novelist; he was a brilliant speaker with a magnificent voice, and with burning dark eyes that lent new meaning to every word and tone; and at the time when I knew him he had come to be the editor and the owner of the greatest Catholic newspaper in the States. His pen and his tongue were at the service of every

good cause; he was a true friend and most charming companion, and was recognised as an ornament to the most cultured society of Boston. But how, it may be asked, did all this constitute him a subject of debate in the English House of Commons? The explanation is, that Boyle O'Reilly was a devoted Irish Nationalist who had in his youth become a member of the Fenian organisation in Ireland. He had from his boyhood a passion for the life of a soldier; and as his people would not listen to his ideas he ran away and became a private in the Tenth Hussars. He was a splendid rider, and he soon became a favourite alike with officers and men. Then the Fenian organisation came into existence, and O'Reilly became a member of it, and induced several of his comrades to become members as well. The abortive insurrection broke out, and O'Reilly was tried and sentenced to death. His military superiors, who had admired the young man's soldierly capacity, made strong efforts on his behalf, and the sentence was commuted to transportation for life. Our transportation system still existed so far as Western Australia was concerned. O'Reilly was sent out as a convict to Western Australia after having been for a time imprisoned in the old gaol at Millbank, which has since been converted into the abode of a fine arts collection. O'Reilly escaped from his bonds in Western Australia and wandered away until he found a refuge among a native savage tribe. I do not suppose it was quite like the native tribe with whom M. de Rougemont professed to have spent so many eventful years; but at all events the tribe took a liking to O'Reilly, and the chief of the tribe showed an especial friendship for him. O'Reilly was a man who could turn his hand to anything, and he soon became an adept in all the sports and exercises of

his uncivilised brothers. He explained to them, however, that he was anxious to get back to civilisation, and finally at his request they constructed a great raft for him, gave him a stock of such provisions as they had to give, and launched him on the broad bosom of the Pacific. After much tossing about and much experience of hunger and thirst he was picked up by a vessel from New Bedford in Massachusetts. He told his story, and the captain of the vessel took a liking to him, as, indeed, everybody did who came to know Boyle O'Reilly, and he was safely landed at length on the Massachusetts shore. There the captain gave him a few coins to help him on his way, and Boyle O'Reilly, the escaped convict, set out to begin the world again.

He started for Boston, and after some time he obtained humble employment at the office of a newspaper. He had always a love of literature, and a remarkable literary gift; and he soon became a writer on the staff of the journal; he made money by delivering lectures and writing books, and at length he became editor and proprietor of the paper, and saw himself a rich man, welcomed in the most intellectual of Boston society. I came to know John Boyle O'Reilly well, and found him a true friend. The very soul of chivalry was in him. In some of our conversations he told me that the one thing in his political life he regretted was that he had worked for the Fenian organisation while still wearing the uniform and taking the pay of the Queen. If it were to do again, he said that he would have got out of the Army in some way in the first instance, and then joined the insurrectionary movement; but that he would not have become a Fenian while actually serving as a soldier in the British ranks. The scruple of conscience so frankly acknowledged was in keeping with

all that I had ever known of Boyle O'Reilly's noble character. An American of high position and great intellect once said to me, 'I know nothing about your English politics or your Home Rule cause, or the complaints that you Irishmen make against the English Government: I only know that your English Government could do nothing better with John Boyle O'Reilly and Michael Davitt than to make convicts of them, and that's about enough for me.'

Not very long after my last visit to America, my daughter and I were in Paris, in August, 1890, and somewhere near the Eiffel Tower there came on a heavy shower of rain which obliged us to take refuge under the portico of a doorway. As we stood there a newspaper boy passed selling copies of 'Galignani.' I bought one, and opening it, read an Atlantic telegram announcing the death of my friend John Boyle O'Reilly.

CHAPTER XII

CHARLES SUMNER — WALT WHITMAN

FEW public men whom I have seen had as commanding a presence as Charles Sumner. He had all the stature and the bulk of Bismarck; but he had a very handsome, finely cut face, which Bismarck certainly had not. I have already mentioned Sumner's name in this volume when I said that I brought to him a letter of introduction from John Bright. My personal acquaintance with Sumner was formed in New York, where I met him in the editorial rooms of the 'New York Independent,' for which I wrote a good deal during my first visit to America, and since; but my recollections naturally identify Sumner with Washington, which was his home for many years. At the time when I came to know him there, he was at the very zenith of his fame as a public man. He was a Member of the Senate, and held the high position of chairman of the Senate's Committee on Foreign Affairs, a body which is of the greatest importance in the political life of America, as it holds an almost absolute control over the external policy of the President.

The name of Charles Sumner had long been famous in England. He had travelled much in Europe; he was a close student of English literature, English history, and English law. He knew France well also; and was able to make an eloquent and powerful speech in French. He had been a lawyer, but had become

absorbed into political life; and at the time when I knew him he was probably the greatest political orator in the United States. His name was dear to all the party in England who were opposed to slavery; for during his whole career he had been an uncompromising opponent of the slave system and the slave trade. He was the opponent also of every measure in the policy of his country which tended towards the increase and extension of slavery, and the acquisition of new soil in which slavery might be fostered. He held, indeed, much the same position in the United States as the Wilberforces and Zachary Macaulays of a former generation had held in England. His was a strong and a strenuous nature, not wanting certainly in kindliness and gentleness, but apt to be carried to extreme lengths by the fierce ardour of any struggle in which he was engaged. He was an unsparing controversialist, a terribly hard hitter in debate, a man who had the faculty of arousing to new vehemence and more bitter opposition even the less extreme among his opponents. He was a sort of Bright without Bright's sense of humour, and without Bright's underlying benevolence. I am now speaking of Charles Sumner as a public man, because in the man privately there was undoubtedly much benevolence and kindliness; but I think that for an avowed philanthropist he was about the most hard-hitting philanthropist I have ever known. He held to his own opinions with an uncompromising and indomitable spirit, which spared nobody who fell in any way short of his standard of fidelity to principle. Therefore he naturally made many enemies, and I do not know that he was very much loved by those who habitually worked with him in political life.

One event in his personal history created at the time

a great sensation throughout the whole civilised world. Sumner had made in the Senate a tremendous attack on the advocates of that Southern policy which was destined to bring on, and by some was even designed to bring on, the Civil War. A member of the Southern party, named Preston Brooks, made a fierce attack on Sumner in the Senate House itself, struck him several blows on the head with a bludgeon, and left him lying senseless on the ground. The assailant received the applause of unthinking people in the Southern States, and was presented with a testimonial in the form of a gold-headed cane professing to come from certain Southern ladies in recognition of the manner in which he had advocated the cause of the South. Sumner was for a long time incapacitated from taking any part in public affairs by the injuries which he had received. His assailant offered him the satisfaction of a duel, but Sumner was on principle an uncompromising opponent of the duelling system, and, indeed, was an unqualified opponent of war, whether public or private, unless in the form of absolute self-defence. I had often wondered how it came about that a man of Sumner's gigantic stature and powerful frame was not able to hold his own against any single assailant; but Sumner himself explained to me how the attack was made, and why it was so completely successful. The attack was made in the old Senate Chamber, not the Chamber more lately in use, with which many of us have been made familiar. The business of the day was over, the other senators had gone, and Sumner was sitting alone at his desk writing some letters. Most people know that in both Houses of the American Congress, as in the Houses of the Canadian Legislation, each member has a desk and a seat all to himself, at which he can write while a

debate is going on. Charles Sumner sat alone, with his knees under his strong, solid, substantial desk. He was not expecting any attack, when his enemy suddenly sprang upon him and struck him a fierce blow on the head. Sumner endeavoured to rise, but his knees were imprisoned by the desk; and before he could extricate himself, blow after blow had descended, and he fell senseless. I remember well at the time when the news of this assault came to London, the late Sir George Cornewall Lewis gave one other proof of his profound political intelligence when he described the attack in the Senate House as the first blow struck in a civil war. I had many long talks with Sumner, and found him a most interesting companion. His views on most subjects were precisely those which we had been advocating in our 'Morning Star' at home, and then he had a great knowledge of English public affairs and public men. He had a great admiration for Cobden and Bright, and he believed, as I had always believed, that Cobden was much more the extreme democrat of the two. He told me that Cobden had once said to him in Bright's presence, speaking, of course, in a tone of perfectly good-humoured banter, that Bright was certain to die a Right Honourable. The prediction, of course, came true, but nobody among Bright's friends or enemies ever supposed for a moment that the title of Right Honourable was any temptation to Bright, or had anything whatever to do with inducing Bright to take office in an Administration. Sumner told me also that when he once pressed Cobden to tell him why he had always refused to take office, Cobden laughingly said that he supposed if he were to take office he could never again venture to ride in a twopenny omnibus. Sumner was a great admirer of Charles James Fox; and he once found

fault with something I had carelessly written about the great orator and statesman. I was describing one of Fox's conversations with Napoleon, and the spirited manner in which he had resented the absurd suggestion that William Pitt was capable of encouraging plots for Napoleon's assassination. I wrote that Fox had resented the suggestion in his bad French. Sumner took my words quite seriously, and gravely assured me that I had done Fox a great injustice, inasmuch as Fox was admired in Paris for his perfect French. I was quite willing to accept Sumner's assurance; but he was too much in earnest to be satisfied with my willingness to acknowledge my error on his authority. He produced book after book written at the time of Fox's visit to Paris, and containing descriptions of him by various writers, Frenchmen or Frenchwomen, who all agreed in expressing their admiration for Fox's perfect mastery of the French tongue. I dare say I wrote the words on the too hasty assumption that every English public man would be likely to speak bad French, but somehow I could not feel very sorry for the blunder I had made, because in the first instance it certainly could not in any way trouble Fox, and in the second place it procured for me the pleasure of a delightful exposition from Sumner and the reading of several most interesting passages from the books which he brought to his aid.

Sumner told me of a conversation which he had had with Prince Bismarck not very long, as it turned out, before the war of 1870, in which Bismarck told him that England was counted out of European politics as long as she had a discontented Ireland close to her western coast. He put himself to great trouble to show me all over Washington, and to make me acquainted

with the associations of each particular spot, whether inside the capital or without it; and he told me many personal anecdotes which, under the conditions, had naturally for me the deepest interest. About this time Sumner had taken up a very strong position of what seemed like positive hostility to England on the subject of the Alabama claims — that is, the claims made by the United States Government for damages alleged to have been inflicted upon American shipping interests and the American national cause during the Civil War by England's supposed neglect to prevent the sailing of armed Southern cruisers from her ports. There were claims for indirect as well as direct damages — the claims for the indirect damages sweeping over and including every possible injury which might be assumed by the widest process of construction to have been inflicted on any Northern state, city, or individual. These indirect claims had been set up chiefly through the influence of Sumner. All through his career down to the outbreak of the Civil War Sumner had been a devoted admirer of England. He took his anti-slavery policy from English teachers; he took his peace policy from English teachers. He had assumed, as many other Americans did, that when the Civil War was forced upon the Federal Government, the whole public of England as an anti-slavery state would give its sympathy to the Northern cause. He was utterly disappointed when he found that London society almost as a whole, and 'the classes' in general, to adopt Mr. Gladstone's phrase, were going with the South. He felt the sort of disappointment that might be felt by a lover, the queen of whose heart has turned against him and betrayed him; his love for England changed for the time into something like hate.

At that time I had taken up and carried out the idea of giving a public address in the Cooper Institute, New York, in order, if possible, to correct or to temper the opinions which were formed by Sumner and by many other leading Americans. My object was to point out that the English public in general must not be confounded with society and the classes; that the whole working population of England were in sympathy with the Northern cause; that some of the best educated men in England, men like John Stuart Mill and Goldwin Smith, were on the same side, and that even among the classes the sympathy with the South was not caused by any approval of the slave system, but by a mistaken idea that the Northern States only took up abolition as a weapon of war, and also by the ignoble idea that the Southerners were gentlemen, and ought, therefore, to have the good wishes of their kith and kin, the gentlemen of England. I did not endeavour to deny or to excuse the action of the classes in England, who wished for the success of the South; but only to show that their wishes did not represent the wishes of the people of England, and were not in any case inspired by any love for the system of slavery. Sumner gave to the expression of my views a sort of good-natured indulgence; and I think he conceded so much to my position as to admit that it was not inconsistent with the part I had taken as editor of the 'Morning Star.' But beyond that I could not get him to go by any amount of argument, and, indeed, even while I thought him unreasonable and extravagant in his condemnation of the whole English people for the wrong-doing of a certain section of English society, I could not fail to understand the manner in which the heart of the man must have been torn by disappointment and pain before the lover of

England could thus have been converted into England's seemingly most bitter foe. I received a letter from John Bright, some passages of which, bearing on this particular question, may be read with deep interest even now, more than a quarter of a century after the whole controversy has passed into history: —

'As to the American question, I can do nothing. You know how much I did to keep our Government out of the hole ten years ago; it is more easy to keep out of a hole than, when in, to get out of it.

'But I think the Government at Washington utterly wrong now. Their "case" is a violent harangue to a jury, and not a calm argument to a bench of judges. It is "attorneyship," and not of a high type, and not statesmanlike. I can do nothing in the matter; perhaps if a Presidential Election were not imminent a settlement would be easier. It may be that Grant and his friends are playing with Mr. Sumner's cards?

'I hope these unpleasant suspicions are unjust to them, but they will thrust themselves into my mind.'

Bright's ideas with regard to Sumner's influence in the setting up of the indirect claims was perfectly correct. General Grant afterwards frankly admitted himself that the principle of the indirect claims had been adopted by the Government chiefly to please Sumner; that the Government had never any intention of pressing them, and that they ought not to have been taken up to please anybody. As we all know, the indirect claims were absolutely put aside by the Geneva Convention, which fully recognised the right of the United States to the most substantial damages and the fullest apology from the English Government for the injuries inflicted on Northern commerce and Northern national

interests by England's mistaken policy with regard to the Southern cruisers. I am not now, however, concerned in reviving this long-settled controversy for the sake of any historical interest attaching to the controversy itself: I only refer to it because it illustrates most effectively the temperament and character of one great American, Charles Sumner. I could not help feeling all through that the very bitterness of Sumner's disappointment and the extravagance of the hostility toward England which it brought into his mind were in themselves only evidences of the long-time devotion which Sumner had felt and displayed towards the national policy of England in regard to the question of slavery. I am glad to remember that Sumner's strong feelings on the subject did not prevent him from writing a good-tempered and friendly letter in reply to an invitation which he had received to attend a banquet given by Cyrus Field, in New York, just before the return of the British High Commissioners to London. Sumner's letter is worth quoting: —

'Senate Chamber, Washington, May 20, 1871.

'Dear Mr. Field, — My duties will detain me here, so that I must content myself with "bare imagination of the feast" to which you kindly invite me. I regret that I cannot be with you. Say, if you please, to your distinguished guests that we are all sorry to part with them; and that, for myself, I venture to hope that the relations of goodwill and fellowship which they have established here will be a new bond of concord between our two countries. But I cannot pardon them for returning without seeing Niagara, and a prairie.

'Sincerely yours,

'Charles Sumner.'

Charles Sumner showed me many kindnesses during my stay in America. I well remember that towards the close of my second visit, I met him in New York, and told him that I was about to return to Europe. 'But only *en congé*, I presume,' he said, with a smile. I told him that I was actually going back to London to stay there, although I had good hope of being able to revisit America at some future time. Sumner strongly pressed me to give up my idea of returning to London, to stay in America and attach my fortunes to the States; and he argued that there was a far better opening for a young writer in America than there could be in the 'old country.' I tried to evade any serious argument by telling him that I had a great fondness for the ancient cities of the Old World, and that I liked to be near them so as to have a better chance of visiting most of them. This position of mine he endeavoured ingeniously and pleasantly to turn. 'Bear in mind,' he said, 'that most of us Americans who care anything for travel are able to see far more of the Old World than many of your London literary men have been able to do.' Then he mentioned to me the names of several American authors and journalists who had made themselves acquainted with every city in Europe, and with all the famous places of Asia and of Africa as well. Still I held to my ground, and then he went on to point out to me that there was a career open to a literary man in the United States which was practically closed against the ambition of his literary brother in London. 'The author or journalist,' he said, 'who had rendered any service to a political cause in the United States was as likely as not to be sent as Minister to some foreign Court, while nothing was less likely than that such a man in England should attain any such position. He told me of two

instances coming within the sphere of his own personal knowledge in which two Englishmen of recognized literary distinction had been known to be anxious for a diplomatic post in the United States and in neither case had the wish been gratified. One was the case of a very eminent man indeed whose friends were certain that he would very gladly have accepted the position of Minister to Washington, but he told me it was well understood that successive Governments had thought such an appointment quite out of the question, and would not depart from the routine of the Diplomatic Service. 'Now,' he said, 'if these men had been American citizens they are just the sort of men we should be glad to see appointed to represent us in some foreign capitals.' 'Therefore,' he added with a good-humoured smile, 'just think it over and settle down here and become an American citizen, and see whether some day you may not be accredited as United States Minister to the Court of St. James.' I knew of course that Sumner did not mean his suggestion to be taken too literally, and I told him that I did not regard myself as very likely to shine in a diplomatic career; but I quite recognised the general kindliness of his purpose and the friendliness of his wish that I should endeavour to make a career for myself in the United States. When he went on to remind me that many of my Irish fellow-countrymen had won for themselves high positions in American life, I found that I had an opportunity given to me of explaining to him one of my strong reasons for resolving to return to England. I told him that I was an Irish Nationalist first of all, that I was full of faith in the good work which might be done for Ireland by appealing to the intelligence and the sympathies and the justice of the English people through the medium of the

Parliament in Westminster. And I told him that one of my strong desires was to represent an Irish constituency in the House of Commons. Thereupon he at once became grave and sympathetic; he approved of my purpose and wished me good fortune in my effort. I only saw Charles Sumner once after that conversation, and had then only some few words with him on the general condition of political affairs in England and America. I shall always retain the most deeply imprinted recollection of his noble presence, of his commanding abilities, of his absolute devotion to what he had set before him as public principle, of the strange freak of destiny which had so changed his whole attitude towards England as a State, of the many interesting talks I had with him, and of the kindness which he always showed me. I have heard him spoken of as intellectually arrogant and overbearing; I can only say that no such impression of him remains upon my mind.

Through the kindness of a friend in Washington I made the acquaintance of Walt Whitman. I was naturally anxious to meet the poet whose name and fame were beginning just then to be subjects of keen debate in English literary circles. Walt Whitman was then living in the most unpretending sort of way. He was lodged in a room like a garret, up several flights of stairs in a thickly populated building. I had heard in America two very distinct descriptions given of Walt Whitman. One was that of a man who by his very nature was absolutely indifferent to public opinion and to conventional appearances, a man who as long as he had a roof to cover him, a truckle bed to sleep in, a basin and ewer wherewithal to wash, any sort of homely food to eat, and a desk to write upon, could be happy in himself and let the world go its way unheeded. The other

description was that of a man who went in for being a penniless poet, who made up for the part and acted it, and was more concerned to display his poverty than Dives or Jim Fisk would have been to show off his wealth. Even as I stood in Walt Whitman's room for the first time and looked at the stately figure of the iron-grey poet himself, I could not keep out of my mind a whimsical sort of idea that if I were asked then and there to decide at once as to the comparative accuracy of the two descriptions I should be a little puzzled as to the answer that I ought to give. For, certainly, if one were getting up the part of a poverty-stricken poet proud of his poverty and parading it defiantly before the eyes of all stray comers, it must be owned that the theatrical business could not be better arranged. There was the humble bed, there was the poor washstand, there were the two or three rickety chairs, there was the shelf with the cut loaf of bread, there was the staggery writing-desk, and there were the leaves of paper strewn over the desk and the table. Anyone in the least acquainted with the ways of the theatre would only have to see the curtain rise on such a scene in order to know that the poverty-stricken poet was about to be 'discovered.' But then, on the other hand, it was surely more reasonable to take the whole scene in its natural sense as the home of one who was simply poor and was not in the least ashamed of his poverty.

Thus I read the story of Walt Whitman's room the moment I had looked into the eyes of the good old poet himself. If ever sincerity and candour shone from the face of a man, these qualities shone from the face of Walt Whitman. There was an unmistakable dignity about the man despite his poor garb and his utterly careless way of life. He had a fine presence with his

broad rugged forehead and his iron-grey hair, giving the idea of premature old age. There was a simple dignity in his manner which marked him out as one of nature's gentlemen. We had a long and pleasant talk on many subjects; and he asked me various questions about English life and English literary men. He found good-natured fault with some of the friends who had gone too far, as he thought, in sounding his praises throughout England; and he altogether disclaimed the idea that he considered himself as a man with a grand mission to open a new era for the poetry of his country. He claimed no mission, he said, and he had only written poems because they came into his mind, and he wrote them in the form which they had worn when they presented themselves to his imagination. But he rejected with perfect good humour the idea of his ever having set himself up to be the prophet or the herald of a new order of things in American literature. We talked a little about certain theories of his as to the degree of frankness with which the poetic art might touch upon the realities of life; but while he stated his opinions freely he showed no particular anxiety to argue the subject, and did not seem to me to be in any sense a man who went about the world filled with any desire to shock the nerves of his more conventional fellow-beings. Indeed, I am bound to say that the whole question was raised by me and not by Walt Whitman. He seemed to have the kindly feeling that as I had expressed a wish to get at his ideas on questions of poetry and of art in general he had better make no work about the matter but tell me what he thought, and so have done with it. Nothing could be less like the manner of a man who desires to attitudinise than was the whole bearing of Walt Whitman. I am not certain whether we should

have talked of his poems or of poetry at all if I had not directly brought up the subject and made it clear to him that I was anxious to hear something from his lips about it. I felt after I had seen him that first time that I understood better than ever the genesis of his poetry and was at least beginning to understand how it came to take such a form. I have always retained the same opinion of Walt Whitman's poems which I had before I ever saw their author. They appealed to me because of the genuine inspiration that was in them, and in spite of the uncouth form in which they were cast, as one might recognise the voice of a genuine singer coming through untrained and uncouth organs. I felt sure that I now knew what Walt Whitman was himself, and that the charm of real manhood was in him and in all that he wrote.

CHAPTER XIII

HENRY WARD BEECHER — WOMAN'S RIGHTS

I HAVE already spoken of the banquet which was given in New York by Mr. Cyrus Field in honour of the British High Commissioners, and in fact to celebrate the agreement between England and the United States which resulted in the Treaty of Washington and the Convention of Geneva. I was present at the banquet, and I well remember the effect which was produced by the speech of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. Many speeches had been delivered during the course of the evening by Englishmen and Americans, and the level of the eloquence was decidedly high; but the hours were waning, and ceremonial speeches have seldom an exhilarating effect, and the general impression that the proceedings might well draw to a close was becoming apparent in the company when the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was called on to propose the last toast of the evening. The toast was 'The Two Great English-speaking Nations of the Old and New World — may there be perfect peace between them.' Beecher spoke only for a few minutes, but his speech roused the assemblage to the most thorough animation. I talked with some of the English Commissioners afterwards, and they told me that they had been waiting with keen interest to hear so famous an orator as Mr. Beecher, but had not expected that he could create so profound an emotion

as he did by a speech which was compressed into only a few sentences. Beecher had a powerful voice, a thoroughly dramatic style, an instinct that always enabled him to reach the minds and hearts of his listeners whoever they might be, and a rough and ready way about his extemporaneous eloquence which made the speech go directly to the feelings of everybody and over the head of nobody. The eloquence of Henry Ward Beecher was not new to me; I had heard it years before in London, in Exeter Hall. That was at a time when the American Civil War was at its fiercest, and Beecher had been requested by Abolitionists on both sides of the water to come over to England and put the case of the Northern States fairly before the English public. At that time the predominant feeling — the feeling, that is to say, of all those who could most easily make their voices heard from the platform or through the journals — was decidedly in favour of the South.

On the night when Beecher addressed the great meeting in Exeter Hall it soon became evident that the audience included a large number of sympathisers with the Southern cause. No one could have discovered this more quickly than Beecher. He was ready for the occasion. He saw at once that the desire of many was to deny him an uninterrupted hearing, and he seemed to have made up his mind that whatever might happen he must be heard. He soon made it quite clear to even the least sympathetic among his audience that it would be their own loss if they did not listen, for they would only miss the chance of hearing such a style of eloquence as they were not likely often to hear. He had a powerful ringing voice which proved from the first that there was not the remotest chance of any hostile minority being able to howl him down. He had a large head,

suggesting great intellectual strength and resolve; and although his features had not the statuesque form which belonged to the face of Wendell Phillips and that of Charles Sumner, yet there was something impressing and even commanding in their rugged power. Then he took care not to indulge in disquisitions; he thrust his arguments at his opponents as rapidly and as fiercely as if they had been sword-blades. I was what might be called a student of public oratory at that time, and I soon began to think I could clearly see the purpose with which Beecher shaped the form of his speech. His plan evidently was to make it so interesting, so full of point, so bristling with clever retorts and repartees that even those who interrupted him by rude questions would take good care not to lose a word of the ready reply. In this way he soon captivated even the most hostile amongst his audience — captivated them, that is to say, to the extent that they were perfectly determined not to miss a word he spoke, no matter how distinctly their minds were made up in advance against the possibility of being converted by his arguments. To any interruption coming even from the remotest corner of the Hall he had a reply that came as quickly as if it were an echo of the interrupting voice. I remember well that while he was justifying the Northern policy of war to put down the rebellion, he made some allusion to the dictates of humanity and religion impelling the movement for the abolition of slavery. 'Religion — and war!' shouted a scornful stentorian voice, as if the owner of the voice meant to ask him how religion and war could go together. 'Religion — and war,' retorted Beecher, 'yes; and what is the emblem on the banner of St. George but the cross upon the field of blood?' This is only one illustration out of many that

might be used to show the readiness with which Beecher was able to turn every interruption against the man who had interrupted and to make the audience feel that happen what might they must not lose a word he uttered.

I met Beecher during my first visit to America, and I heard him preach in the temple of his ministrations, the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn. Beecher's style as a preacher was more like that of the pulpit orators who flourished a century or two ago than like the style of our own more refined or more conventional days. He never thought it beneath himself or his calling to say an amusing thing in one of his sermons if the thought came up appropriately in his mind. He had a way when he entered his church on the Sunday of taking up any letters which might be addressed to him there; and he sometimes opened one of these and read it out to the congregation, and made it a text on which to hang a discourse. One day he opened such a letter and he found that it contained the single word 'Fool.' He mentioned the fact to his congregation, and then quietly added, 'Now I have known many an instance of a man writing a letter and forgetting to sign his name; but this is the only instance I have ever known of a man signing his name and forgetting to write the letter.' I heard Beecher speak at many meetings in New York and in Brooklyn, and I always retained the same impression that I had formed when I heard him in Exeter Hall — the impression that he was a man to whom you could not choose but listen. There was no choice in the matter when Beecher began to speak — you could not withdraw your attention for a moment. He had won for himself a position of the most commanding influence in American life, both political and social.

He only interested himself in politics where the leading principles of his own school of thought were concerned. He was an Abolitionist, and was opposed to any policy which encouraged or even tolerated slavery. He was against all manner of aggressive warfare; he was devoted to the Temperance cause, and his opinions on religious questions were sometimes broad enough to startle the prejudices of many, even in his own denomination. He lived in an atmosphere of controversy: it was his fortune to make enemies almost everywhere; and his enemies at one time got up a kind of crusade against him which resulted in something very like a public scandal. I was not personally drawn to him as I was drawn to many other leading Americans; but I could not believe for a moment in the justice of some of the charges that were made against him. He was placed in a dangerous position, for he was received as a dictator and a despot, to adopt words which Disraeli once applied to Gladstone, by hundreds and thousands of men and women who took his every utterance as a law of life. Where other great preachers and orators had students and followers, Beecher had devotees and worshippers. It is not difficult to understand how such a man runs the chance of making enemies almost in every household where his words are held up as if they were the utterances of Providence. Some of us are naturally apt to revolt against the attempt thus to force a dictator upon us; and I believe it was chiefly in this way that Beecher came to be the object of many an envenomed attack. Beecher's position, however, remained to the end one of command.

I may almost be said to have seen the last of him. After the defeat of Mr. Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill in 1886 I went out to the United States and Canada

with the object of pleading for the National cause and explaining the nature of the immense advance it had made when the greatest of English statesmen had proclaimed it as his own. I may say in passing that I began my series of meetings in the Academy of Music, New York, and that I feel bound to pay a tribute to the assistance I received in this my opening discourse from a practical and valuable hint given to me by the late Henry George. Henry George was one of the friends who gathered around me on the stage which became the platform of the meeting. I had met Henry George several times in London during former days, and was able to appreciate his indomitable earnestness in every cause which he undertook, and the extraordinary ability which he brought to the service of the one great question concerning the ownership of land to which he may be said to have devoted his whole life. Even where one could not agree with Henry George, an impartial observer must have acknowledged his ability, his earnestness, his entire sincerity, and his rich resources of argument. Now, however, I am only dealing with the practical hint which he gave me on the occasion of my opening address in the Academy of Music. The question of Home Rule was one of intense interest to all Irishmen and men of Irish birth in New York, and was becoming one of great interest also to Americans who could sympathise with Irish national feeling, and to Americans who recognised the practical reality that must attach to any cause which had the championship of Mr. Gladstone. The hall was crowded to excess, and people were still striving to get in as I was rising to begin my speech. Just as I rose Henry George touched me on the arm and admonished me not to come to the practical part of my discourse until the audience

had altogether settled down. 'Talk generalities,' he whispered, 'for the next few moments; give them time to find their places before you go on to the business part of your speech.' I acted strictly on his advice; I talked generalities as showy and fine as I could well make them, until the noise of settling into seats had subsided, and then I became business-like, dropped eloquence and went straight to the purpose of my discourse. I always felt that I owed Henry George a good turn for that practical word in season. I met him often afterwards in New York, and I always had a firm belief that he had a long and a most useful career before him, and few outside the circle of his most intimate friends could have felt more regret than I did when that career came suddenly to an untimely end.

I come back now from my digression, and I pass over my season of stump oratory in the United States and Canada, in order to bring my narrative at once to a meeting which I held in Brooklyn towards the close of my visit. At that meeting I had the honour of Henry Ward Beecher's presence on my platform. He and I and some other friends had dined at the house of Mr. Seth Low, a citizen of Brooklyn, whose name is the synonym for public spirit and for liberal help to every educational movement; and from the dinner-table we went to the meeting, where Beecher delivered a powerful and a thrilling speech as full of common sense as it was of eloquence in favour of the claim for Home Rule in Ireland. That was the last time I ever saw Beecher, and I am not sure whether that was not the last public meeting he ever addressed. Certainly I left America not many days after, and Beecher was dead before I reached the shores of England. He had always been unsparing of his physical resources, and his was not a

frame made to endure a long and incessant strain. He had had many troubles, and they pressed heavily upon a nature more sensitive than ordinary observers might have supposed it to be; and his career came almost suddenly to a close — his death was like the falling of a great tree which an unexpected tempest has torn from its roots. He had lived long enough to make his name memorable in the history of many a noble cause, and it will always be honourably associated with the overthrow of the slave system in his native country.

Among the many movements to which the energy of Henry Ward Beecher lent a helping hand must be included the movement for what used to be called the emancipation of woman — Woman's Rights, as the phrase began to be couched. Now I had seen some of the early struggles of the Woman's Rights movement as an organisation in the United States. I had known some of the most distinguished of the women who were identified with its progress. Like all other political and social movements, it had its fanatics, it had its absurdities and its extravagances, and it had its mistakes and its mishaps. Nothing could be more easy than to turn the Woman's Rights movement into mere ridicule; and in this country even those who supported, or at all events did not directly oppose, the movement for obtaining the suffrage for women, were much disposed to treat the forward movement in America as something altogether noisy, shrieking, grotesque, and ridiculous. My own impressions, formed gradually after some opportunities of observation in America, did not by any means bear out the view too commonly entertained in England. Moreover, it may surprise some of my readers to learn that I believed the movement to have made on the whole more solid progress in England than it had in the

United States. No man of the same purely intellectual force as John Stuart Mill had stood up as the champion of the American movement. Then, again, for a variety of reasons, there is a more free opportunity for a display of the mere extravagances of fanaticism and faddism in America than there is in steady, sober, conventional old England; and fanaticisms and faddisms do undoubtedly tend to make ordinary persons hold back from any movement which is disfigured by their presence. Thus I found that I left behind me in England a larger amount of general toleration for the Woman's Rights movement than I could discover when I came to study the conditions of the same movement in the United States. I remember one American woman who came over to England, as a champion of the rights of her down-trodden sex, and whose main idea of woman's emancipation was to induce all women, English and American, to go about in trousers. Now I came to know this lady very well both here and in the States, and I came to have a great respect for her earnestness and her character; but I could not help seeing that a great many intelligent persons in London regarded her simply as a type and illustration of the whole American movement. I remember an English lady saying to me shortly before I left England on my first visit to America: 'Now I have not the slightest doubt that you will be received in New York by an imposing deputation of American ladies in trousers.' I am bound to say that the only American lady in trousers whom I ever encountered in the United States was the same lady whose acquaintance I had already made in London.

But the Woman's Rights movement in America was undoubtedly to a great extent kept back and injured by the number of fanatical side shows, if I may be allowed

to use such an expression, which were started as it went its way, and claimed a right to belong to it and to shelter themselves under its authority. The women who really led the American movement had no purpose in their minds but the one purpose of obtaining for women in general the right to be citizens, the right to vote at elections, and the right to maintain themselves as men could do. While I was observing the movement in America, English women had already acquired the right to be elected members of school boards, and people here had absolutely ceased to find anything ridiculous in the idea that an educated woman should sit at such a board on terms of equality with Lord Lawrence or Professor Huxley. I knew Mrs. Julia Ward Howe in Boston, New York, and afterwards in London, and I think all those who knew her as well as I did, will say that they had never met a more educated, a more accomplished, a more thoughtful, and a more reasonable woman. Mrs. Ward Howe is only one of many women who had equal claims to stand up as leaders of the American movement, and unless we are to go back to the old-fashioned ideas, long happily exploded from civilisation, that the only fitting occupation in life for woman is to knit stockings, or to cook vegetables, or to strum on the piano, there can be no excuse for the suggestion that the great movements of education and of public life should be denied the assistance and the co-operation and the guidance of such women. The Woman's Rights movement had its baptism of fire in the form of ridicule long ago, and it has survived it, and survived, too, most of the extravagances and the frenzies which at one time associated themselves with its progress.

During my earlier visits to America a singular kind

of agitation which called itself the Free Love movement was arousing a great deal of angry feeling in America, and more especially among the more sober-minded advocates of woman's right to the franchise, who justly believed that their sane and steady movement was likely to be injured by such grotesque parodies of its principles and its arguments. In England many people were apt to regard the Free Love agitation as something which made a part of the Woman's Rights movement, and many keen satirical articles were written in London papers on the assumption that the two movements were practically identical. In the United States everyone who looked with interest upon the subject could see for himself that the leaders of the Woman's Rights movement held themselves absolutely apart from any manner of association with the advocates of the other demand. I never quite knew myself what it exactly was that the leaders of the Free Love movement desired to have. I knew some of the women who were prominent in the Free Love agitation, and from them I could only make out that they considered most marriages to be badly arranged under the present system, and held that love and affinity of tastes and temperament ought to count for much more, and financial advantages for much less in our matrimonial arrangements. Therein I was compelled to admit that they held the creed that most of the satirists and the moralists and the social philosophers held in England as well as in the United States. Other advocates of Free Love I know went much farther than that; but I at least did not meet with any man or woman professing the creed who went so far as to maintain the principle that the marriage contract should be dissolved just when and how the two married people liked, and without the slightest regard for the

interests of the community in general. English writers constantly made the same mistake, in judging of this movement in America and in estimating the hold it had upon the public mind, that an American writer might make who had got it into his head that the question 'Is marriage a failure?' was agitating the minds and hearts of a large proportion of English women. The truth is that the general social life of the United States flowed on as the current of English social life flowed on, scarcely rippled by the breath of the agitation blowing shrilly here and there from the advocates of Free Love. I do not know whether any of the vague agitation about Free Love survives in America now. During my latest visit to the States I heard little or nothing about it, and for aught I know it may have sunk into oblivion altogether since that time. But even in my earlier visits it had to be sought out as a subject of study by anybody who was curious to know exactly what was going on; and it did not anywhere present itself as a force which counted for much in the real business of social life.

At the time when I first went out to America the English public were much excited by the accounts which my late friend Hepworth Dixon had given of some of the odd communities and sects existing in the great American republic. Dixon wrote in a brilliant, picturesque, and what I may call a slashing style, and people who had not been to America were sometimes disposed to believe that he was making terrible revelations about the social life of the New World. The one great defect of his narratives, as I afterwards found out, was that he drew his illustrations altogether out of proportion to the place they were entitled to have on his canvas, so that a local craze was made to appear as if it were a national convulsion, and the doings of a few

oddities were shown up as if they imaged the characteristics of a people. I shall have to say something later on about my observations and experiences in Salt Lake City and the country of the Mormons where I had an opportunity of seeing a form of life which even then counted for nothing so far as the United States in general were concerned, and which has now practically passed out of American civilisation altogether. But I come back for a moment to the Woman's Rights movement properly so called, and to its leading advocates. I can only say that by far the majority of the women whom I knew as leading exponents of the movement were women of high character and education, women of intelligence and experience, of gentle deportment and graceful manners, women qualified to bear a high place and to exert a commanding influence in the civilisation of any country.

I am not going to say, however, that there were not a good many advocates of the cause in America whose appearance and ways might have been tempting to the pen of the satirist or the pencil of the caricaturist. I can recall to memory one such woman of whom I never heard anything that was not good, but of whom I may fairly say that if some artist on the staff of 'Punch' had been asked to make a drawing of the type 'Woman's Rights woman of America,' he would, without further suggestion, have produced from his own imagination a very fair likeness of the lady whom I have in my mind. He would have made her an angular woman with awkward movements, 'gowned,' as the phrase now goes in the fashion columns of our papers, in rusty black bombazine, with large ungloved hands and heavily shod feet, with a waist that knew no compression of corset, and on her forehead a front that put on no artful sem-

blance of natural growth. I remember that my wife and I once happened to be travelling companions with this lady in the railway from New York to Chicago. This was in the old days before the sleeping-cars had yet their separate assigned compartments for the ladies and the gentlemen. The fair creature of whom I am speaking was preparing to get into her berth, and while doing so was discoursing to us on the social position of woman. 'I am not one of those,' she said, in her kindly didactic manner, 'who would deny to woman the right to make herself pleasing to man; I am not one of those who would forbid to woman the indulgence in any of the pretty harmless affectations which are common to her sex,' and here with the most utter absence of any pretty affectation she removed the greater portion of her hair and hung it on a hook above her head, and then proceeded to draw on a heavily frilled night-cap. I could not help thinking at the time that one of our satirists at home, if he could only have witnessed this little incident, might have found a theme for unending humour in the advocate of woman's rights thus placidly and without concealment hanging her hair upon a hook: it would have served for argument just as well as numbers of other arguments directed against that particular cause, or indeed, against any other cause of social or political reform that has come up in the struggle for civilisation. Let us give the argument its full weight and importance by all means. But let us take a look at another argument which the satirists of the surface ought to feel bound in fairness to acknowledge. Several years ago there came over to London a lady who was and is one of the most distinguished among the leaders of the Woman's Rights movement in America. The lady still was comparatively young and

very handsome and attractive, and she brought with her her eldest daughter, who was one of the most beautiful among the many beautiful American women who have long been invading our shores, and who was herself a strong advocate of the rights of her sex. The mother and the daughter took London by surprise, and Society went into raptures over the beauty and the grace of the younger woman, about her hair and her eyes, and her features and her voice and her movements: she was, indeed, the star of the season. Now I hold that the champions of Woman's Rights are fairly entitled to set off that beautiful young woman against my good old friend in the black bombazine gown who hung her artificial hair on the hook over her head in the sleeping-car.

CHAPTER XIV

SOME SOLDIERS OF THE WAR

I WAS taking leave of General Grant at the White House, Washington, one afternoon during the earlier months of his presidentship, when an English lady met him in the corridor and accosted him as General Grant. Then fancying she had made a serious mistake she became a little embarrassed, and said in hesitating words, 'I beg your pardon: I suppose I ought to have addressed you as Mr. President?' Grant smiled a kindly good-humoured smile, and said, 'I like to be addressed as General Grant, madam; the words bring pleasant old memories with them.' I could easily believe that Grant's courtesy was sincere and unaffected. No man could be more entirely free from any inclination towards pompousness or even formality of ceremonial and address, and I have no doubt that during many a great reception at the White House his mind often went back with affectionate regret to the dear old days and comradeships, to the ups and downs, the roughs and smooths of his life as a soldier. I had the opportunity of meeting Grant several times in America, and I met him also at dinners and receptions in London, when he came over to pay a visit to the Old World. He was habitually a shy and a silent man, but his silence did not come from any want of interest or understanding of general subjects wholly unconnected with

the military routine of his life. He could talk in any gathering of friends with remarkable intelligence, even about subjects with which he could not be supposed to have any practical acquaintance, and he had that sort of well-directed curiosity which can only come from the union of sympathy and intelligence. Everybody must have met with men who have an admitted mastery of their own particular subjects, but who, when taken outside the range of those subjects, appear to have no quick interest in anything. General Grant was certainly not one of those men. If he found himself in company that seemed to him congenial, he could take an interest in anything, and the questions that he put at once showed the keenness of his intellect and the earnestness of his desire to obtain new information. His manners were always easy, unaffected, and agreeable, and the impression which at one time got abroad that he was simply a *bourgeois* endowed with military genius seemed to me to take the most misleading view of his character. Of course, I had no opportunity whatever of any intimate acquaintanceship with Grant, and I only talked to him when we were in company with others, but I had long been by habit and inclination and literary and political training a student of the ways and the talk of men, and I felt sure that I could recognise a really keen and commanding intellect when I came in any way within the sphere of its activity.

Grant was not unwilling to be asked questions about military or political affairs, and it seemed to me that when he felt himself to be in conversation with someone who really wished to acquire information he could become positively fluent in his speech, and impressive and instructive in his very phraseology. I asked him once what he thought the most important qualification for a

military commander — I hope the question was not rude, and he was good-natured enough not to appear to consider it so. Another great soldier, I know, had given it as his opinion that nerve was the first essential of military command; and I was very curious to learn what General Grant's definition would be. Grant thought for a while, and then gave it as his answer that the first qualification of all was patience. He was good enough to explain his meaning by several illustrations which could hardly have been better chosen if I had given him notice of my question as we give notice of a question to a Minister in the House of Commons, and had left him four-and-twenty hours for consideration. The answer appeared to me to be peculiarly characteristic of the man. If ever a commander in the field had been compelled to learn the necessity of patience, General Grant surely must have had that lesson impressed upon him. Not Marlborough, not Wellington could have had it brought more constantly home to his mind during a succession of long campaigns.

To me there appeared to be a great deal of the statesman in the intellect and the character of General Grant. He stands out still in my recollection as one of the most impressive figures within the range of whose influence I have ever been brought, and I think the simplicity of his manners, the homeliness of his style, and the lack of all that might be called the literary form in his conversation only made my general impression of him the deeper and the more distinct. I said to an English friend, 'If ever there was a man with whom the interests of a great nation or a great cause might safely be trusted, I think General Grant is just that man.' I am still of the same opinion, although I never heard General Grant utter a single sentence which, taken by itself,

or as an abstract declaration, or as a text sentence for the student, would be worth the record of the pen of a Xenophon.

Another of the soldiers of the war whom I had the good fortune to meet was General Sheridan. I was especially interested in Sheridan, partly no doubt because he was a countryman of my own, and partly, too, because of the warmth of admiration with which I had heard General Grant speak of him. Sheridan was full of dash and energy and talk, he had all the vivacity and the humour which belonged to his Celtic parentage, and one could understand, almost in a moment, the enthusiasm with which he was regarded by his military comrades. I met Sheridan for the first time at one of the festival gatherings of the Army of the Potomac — great periodical assemblages of the officers and soldiers of that army in one or other of the American cities. We have not, so far as I know, anything corresponding to those reunions on this side of the Atlantic, and I was delighted to have the opportunity of being present on more than one such occasion. I shall never forget the sweet and genial manners, the courtly presence, the unaffected good-humour and courtesy of General Meade, one of the foremost among the Federal heroes at one of those celebrations. I saw him almost borne down by the number of bouquets which admiring hands had thrust upon him, and which, encumber him as they might, he evidently could not bring himself to refuse or even to diminish by selection. If ever there was an actual presentment in real life of Thackeray's Colonel Newcome, it stood there before me, I thought, in the noble form of General Meade.

Another soldier of the war whom I met for the first time at one of those gatherings was General Custer,

whose gallant life afterwards came to so sudden and so disastrous a close in the campaign against the Sioux Indians. Custer had played a most distinguished part as cavalry officer in the Civil War; he was a handsome man, with an abundance of thick yellow hair, and movements so full of natural animation that they seemed to be under restraint in the ordinary ways of civil life, and to suggest, of themselves, the dashing cavalry officer and the *beau sabreur*. I had many opportunities of meeting Custer in Washington and New York and other cities, and we came indeed to be friends, and I was greatly taken by the almost boyish freshness of his manner and the keen interest which he took in all that was going on around him. Somebody said to me with great truth that Custer was a man who could never grow old, and indeed I am sure that the prophecy would have been fulfilled even if the weapons of the Sioux Indians had not secured its fulfilment. I happened once to make a long railway journey with Custer; chance threw us together as companions, and though the mileage of the journey was long the time seemed but short to me in such companionship. Custer had something to tell me about every place we passed through, and every question I asked him suggested a number of subjects to his mind on all of which he was ready to expatiate with a freshness that seemed positively inexhaustible. He was full of stories and anecdotes, and seemed to take a genuine pleasure in giving pleasure to others. The time was one of deep political interest both to Custer and to me, for the 'Alabama' question had not yet been settled by the Treaty of Washington, and the air was full of discussion as to the possibilities of a war between England and the United States. There could be no doubt that if such a war were to break out Custer would have

an important position in the Federal Army, and his was just the sort of dashing impetuous nature which belongs to the soldier who might be supposed to be eager for the chances of war. I found, however, that Custer was as sincerely anxious as any civilian like myself could be, for the maintenance of peace between Great Britain and the United States, and indeed, he went so far as to suggest several means of arrangement by which an honourable understanding of an abiding nature could be arrived at by the two countries.

Not long after this conversation with Custer I attended the banquet already mentioned which was given in New York to the British High Commissioners, and I was reminded of my talk with Custer by a passage in the speech of General McDowell, one of the most distinguished of the Federal officers in the Civil War. General McDowell observed that when people deplored the horrors of war they seemed often to overlook the significant fact that wars were in most cases made by the civilians, and that it was left to the soldier to conquer the peace. General McDowell pointed out the purely passive nature of the part which the soldier usually played in all the policy that led up to war. The men of peace, as they would ordinarily be called, met together in their several Cabinets and planned the policy which led to the war. It might be a rightful policy or it might be a wrongful policy; but whatever it was, the soldier had absolutely nothing to do with it. I have often, indeed, observed in the course of my own experience that when some question is at issue between some two States which may lead to war, one usually finds a far greater heat of passionate utterance among civilians than among soldiers. While I am referring to General McDowell's remarks at the New York banquet

I may be allowed to say that some passages of his speech expressing an earnest hope for a cordial understanding between Great Britain and the American Republic would sound even more appropriate if they were delivered at the present day. The soldier as peacemaker would seem to be an odd figure in history, but certainly General McDowell stood forth in the character of soldier as peacemaker that night, and indeed, I am much inclined to doubt whether the politician may not some day come to be regarded as the great peacebreaker of the world.

Another soldier of the war whom I came to know was General Nathaniel Prentice Banks; but I only came to know him long years after the Washington Treaty and the banquet in New York. I sat next to General Banks at a dinner given in a quiet New England town some ten or eleven years ago. When I came to know who he was my memory went back to an odd and absurd association which I had had with his personal career long before. While the American Civil War was going on the readers of London newspapers were much amused by certain letters contributed to a London daily paper, and signed, I think, 'Manhattan.' The letters professed to be written from New York or Washington, and to give an account of all that was going on behind the scenes among the leaders of politics on the Federal side. They were droll farcical pieces of humorous exaggeration designed to cast ridicule upon the Northern cause, and thus to suit the prejudices of the majority of newspaper readers in London at that time. At an ordinary period of our passing history there could be no great harm about them; for they were so grotesquely and obviously extravagant that one might have thought that no Englishman in his

senses could be beguiled by them for a moment. But there undoubtedly were some people in London who readily accepted them as a faithful picture of political life in the Northern States, and who only made them another reason for assuming that a cause must be doomed to failure which had such instruments and agents. In one of these letters an account was given of the perplexity of Abraham Lincoln in his efforts to find commanders for the Northern Army — this one had failed and that one had failed; this one's troops had skedaddled at the opening of every action; that one had himself declined to remain on the field after the bullets began to whistle; and so on — then, having long racked his brain with the effort to find somebody from whom something might be hoped, the President at last bethought him of Nathaniel Prentice Banks. The President sent for him and addressed him with a direct question, 'Nathaniel P. Banks, can you command an army?' 'I presume so, Mr. President,' was the prompt reply: 'at least I know no reason to the contrary, never having attempted to perform any office of the kind.' President Lincoln regarded this reply as perfectly satisfactory, and straightway conferred upon Banks the command of one of the great armies of the Republic.

General Banks, the General Banks of real life, had had a very remarkable career; he had tried many occupations before he took to the business of soldiering: he had been a machinist, a lecturer, a professor, a farmer, a lawyer; he had been a member of the Representative House of Congress; a Speaker of one of the State Legislatures; and he had been a Senator; and at last his military instincts asserted themselves, and he became a soldier, and obtained the command of an army. He commanded in many hard-fought battles, he had had to

carry out campaigns which required the aid of the Navy; he had won brilliant victories; he had undergone defeats; he had been acclaimed as one of the heroes of the war, and now and then denounced at some passing moment as one of its failures; and here he was in this peaceful New England town looking like a man who might have been a lawyer or a physician or even a clergyman, or anything but a celebrated soldier, talking to me about all manner of unwarlike subjects. I have a pleasant memory of that evening, even although its pleasure was interrupted by the fact that I had to deliver a long address in a crowded hall.

Nothing, I think, could have more impressed a stranger visiting America a few years after the Civil War — I am not now speaking of the time when I first met General Banks, but of a time many years before — than the manner in which the great war had left its impress on the whole civil life of the American States. In almost every family he visited he found some men who had served in the war. In the Fifth Avenue of New York, in Beacon Street, Boston, in Michigan Avenue, Chicago, in the poorest villages of New England, the same memorials were everywhere to be seen. Everywhere, too, you met women, ladies of wealth and education many of them, who had taken service as nurses in the field. All this was, of course, to be expected; so great a war had never before in modern history fallen upon a people prepared with so small a professional body whose business it was to conduct the war. But although the stranger might have known all this and reflected on it, none the less was he certain to be surprised at the visible evidences presented by every household that a great war had passed over the land. It was so, of course, in the South just as well as

in the North. Enter what home you would, you met with some member of the family who had served in the war, who perhaps had been wounded in the war. I had an especial reason for noticing all this myself, because wherever I went, in Northern States or Southern, I found countrymen of my own who had borne arms for this side or for that, or came on some Irish household still lamenting for one of the family group who had given his life for the cause which he believed to be the right cause.

Facetious writers from England were often tempted to make fun of the numbers of Generals and Colonels and Captains who were to be found all over the States. The fact had its humorous side, no doubt; if a man had worn the military uniform at all, and had served in a single action, or even had been within the possible range of having to serve in a single action, his friends were very apt, when he returned to his peaceful pursuits, to adorn him with some military title which he had not obtained for himself. His rank generally began with Lieutenant, but very soon rose to be that of Captain and often mounted still higher. During my first visit to New York there was an Irishman in the city whom I had known as a newspaper reporter in Ireland and in England; he afterwards went out to America, not having made a very successful career of it in either of the old countries; and when the Civil War broke out he served on the side of the North. I received a letter from him one day in New York — the war was all over years before that time — inviting me to come to see him at a certain restaurant which he named. I went to see him, and I told one of the attendants I had come on the invitation of Mr. Moriarty — I call him Moriarty, although that was not his name or anything at all like it. The waiter, a German, corrected me politely, and said,

'I presume, sir, you mean General Moriarty.' Presently I saw my friend General Moriarty and we had a long talk together. Whenever I called to see him afterwards I took good care to ask for General Moriarty. Now, that this story should have its proper humorous ending, it ought to have come out that General Moriarty was never in the war at all, or else that he had made a very poor show of it when he was there. But on inquiry among many friends I found that my countryman had served throughout the greater part of the war, had conducted himself remarkably well, and had received some praise for his gallantry and courage, although he had never obtained the rank of an officer. But when the war was over he began at once to be called Captain Moriarty, and the farther the war receded into history the higher became his military rank, until at last he grew to be accepted by his every-day associates as General Moriarty. Nobody was concerned to challenge his right to the distinction; the people who knew him liked him, and were pleased that he should have military honours; the official public were not formally possessed of his claims, and the public in general would in any case have cared nothing about them. If he is alive to this day — and I am sure I hope he is — I make no doubt that amongst his every-day associates he is General Moriarty still. Had he been a conspicuous personage, some sceptical and ill-natured creature would no doubt have raised some question as to the genuineness of his military title, and would have written to the authorities at Washington, or at all events to some newspaper, and caused an inquiry to be started as the result of which my countryman might have had to reduce himself to the ranks. But in his case, indeed, lowliness was ambition's ladder, and the rank which his friends had conferred upon him passed happily unchallenged.

CHAPTER XV

BRIGHAM YOUNG AND THE MORMON CITY

One of the expeditions which I was tempted to make during my early stay in America was a visit to Salt Lake City, the home of the Mormons, over whom Brigham Young then reigned as president and prophet. It was not a very easy journey even then, for although the Pacific Railway had just been opened from New York to San Francisco, it had no direct connection as yet with Salt Lake City, and we had to leave the railway at a certain station and to toil in an old rumbling diligence along a wearisome day's journey up mountains and down valleys until we reached the region of the Salt Lake. Curiosity at that time had been much stimulated in England concerning Salt Lake City, as I have already mentioned, by the writings of my friend Hepworth Dixon, and I was very anxious to see the place and to form my own opinions about it. I had been led to believe that I was to see in the Mormon capital a city of marvellous prosperity and beauty, created by the enterprise, the toil, and the artistic skill of the Mormons to be the wonder and admiration of travellers from all parts of the world, and there had got to be a kind of impression, more or less vague, among many readers that the possession of several wives must inspire a man somehow to find the secret of success. Young people of the present generation will perhaps find it hard to

understand how so extraordinary an effect could have been produced by the writings of two or three travellers, and such persons will have to take it on my word that an effect of the kind was produced, and that some even among those who had seen polygamy in Turkey and in India were almost startled into the belief that the system might have a very different effect in the far west of America. I may say at the outset that my first impressions of Salt Lake City were sadly disappointing. My earliest difficulty was to convince myself that I was really in the place about which I had read so many pages of glowing description. 'Is this Salt Lake City?' I could not help asking myself, as I wandered, downhearted, through the few straggling streets which made up the whole of the Mormon capital; 'Is this really the city of palaces and of prosperity which so many writers have brought before my mind's eye?'

What I saw was a commonplace little American town of the twentieth class — let us say, a little town such as one might see by the dozen in any of the populous States, only sadly wanting in the cleanliness, the neatness, and the order which belonged to any of the little New England towns, such as Miss Wilkins has described in her inimitable stories. I saw no palaces whatever; there were six or eight really good shops in the principal street, and there were a good many comfortable dwelling-houses in and around that principal street. But that street and all the streets — there were not many of them — were ill kept and dirty, pigs were nozzling on the highway, and lean, famished-looking dogs were prowling about in all directions; the place was covered with dust when the day was fine, and full of slush when rain had fallen; there was dirt and garbage everywhere, and the sight of the dunghill became a commonplace in the

city. At the time which I speak of the place was wholly unlighted by any form of artificial illumination, and when darkness set in you had to pick your steps with particular caution if you were anxious to keep clear of the garbage and the dunghill. The principal street had two streams of water, each running down a hollowed channel beside either of the footways, reminding one in a certain way of dear old Berne in Switzerland. These channels in rainy weather sometimes swelled into little torrents, and were bridged over by rickety wooden planks which, on a stormy evening, were liable to be blown out of their places, and then came the danger for the unwary traveller returning home in the darkness of evening or night, lest he should try to cross at the wrong place and plant his foot in the broad puddle. Some of the Mormon residents were very proud of these runnels of living water, and of the purity and freshness which they gave to the atmosphere, and talked as if the city-building art of man had never before accomplished such a triumph of sanitation. Others, again, were very proud of the two rows of 'shade trees' which adorned the principal street, and spoke of them as I had never heard the most bumptious inhabitant of Berlin boast of the rows of lindens.

The town possessed two large buildings — the Tabernacle and the Theatre. The Tabernacle was undoubtedly a very huge building. One of the Mormon elders in sounding its praises to me described it as being like the back of a land turtle, and so indeed it was, and its architect deserved all the praise that may justly be given to the man who succeeds in covering and enclosing a huge space with a structure very much resembling in shape the shell of a turtle. The Theatre was a large gaunt building having no other merit than the fact that

it, too, enclosed and covered a certain considerable amount of space, and sheltered its occupants from the night air, the mountain-breezes, and the rains. The house of the president and prophet, Brigham Young, was a somewhat pretentious building, surmounted by a huge gilded beehive — I mean, of course, an emblematic or symbolic beehive, designed to illustrate activity, organisation, and prosperity. It was in this house that I had my first interview with Brigham Young himself. We were received in a kind of office or parlour, hung round with oil paintings of the kind which in England we regard as 'furniture,' and which represented all the great captains and elders of Mormonism. Joseph Smith was there, and Brigham Young, and George L. Smith, then First Councillor; and various others whom to enumerate would be long even if I knew or remembered their names. President Young was engaged just at the moment when we came, but his Secretary — a Scotchman, I think — and George L. Smith were very civil and cordial. George L. Smith was a huge, burly man, with a Friar Tuck joviality of paunch and visage, and a roll in his bright eye which, in some odd, undefined sort of way, suggested cakes and ale. He talked well, in a deep rolling voice, and with a dash of humour in his words and tone — he it was who irreverently but accurately likened the Tabernacle to a land turtle. He spoke with immense admiration and reverence of Brigham Young, and specially commended his abstemiousness and hermit-like frugality in the matter of eating and drinking. Presently a door opened, and the oddest, most whimsical figure I had ever seen off the boards of an English country theatre stood in the room; and in a moment we were presented formally to Brigham Young.

There must have been something of impressiveness

and dignity about the man, for, odd as were his appearance and make-up, one felt no inclination to laugh. But such a figure! Brigham Young wore a long-tailed, high-collared coat; the swallow-tails nearly touched the ground; the collar was about his ears. In shape, the garment was like the swallow-tailed coats which negro-melodists sometimes wear, or like the dandy English dress-coat one can still see in prints in some of the shops of St. James's Street. But the material of Brigham's coat was some kind of rough grey frieze, and the garment was adorned with huge brass buttons. The vest and trousers were of the same material. Round the neck of the patriarch was some kind of bright crimson shawl; and on the patriarch's feet were natty little boots of the shiniest polished leather. I must say that the grey frieze coat, of antique and wonderful construction, the gaudy crimson shawl and the dandy boots, made up an incongruous whole which irresistibly reminded one, at first, of the holiday get-up of some African king who adds to a great coat, preserved as an heirloom since Mungo Park's day, a pair of modern top-boots and a lady's bonnet. The whole appearance of the patriarch, when one had got over the African monarch impression, was like that of a Suffolk farmer as presented on the boards of a country theatre.

But there was decidedly a quality of composure and even of dignity about Brigham Young which soon made one forget the mere ludicrousness of the patriarch's external appearance. Young was a handsome man — much handsomer than his portrait on the wall would show him. Close upon seventy years of age, he had as clear an eye and as bright a complexion as if he were a hale English farmer of fifty-five. But there was some-

thing fox-like and cunning lurking under the superficial good-nature and kindliness of the face. He seemed when he spoke to you most effusively and plausibly, to be quietly studying your expression to see whether he was really talking you over or not. The expression of his face, especially of his eyes, strangely and provokingly reminded me of Kossuth. I think I have seen Kossuth thus watch the face of a listener to see whether or not the listener was conquered by his wonderful power of talk. Kossuth's face, apart from its intellectual qualities, appeared to me to express a strange blending of vanity, craft, and weakness; and Brigham Young's countenance seemed to show just such a mixture of qualities. Great force of character the man must surely have had; great force of character Kossuth, too, had; but the face of neither man seemed to declare the possession of such a quality. Brigham decidedly did not impress me as a man of great ability; but rather as a man of great plausibility. I could at once understand how such a man, with such an eye and tongue, could easily exert an immense influence over women. Beyond doubt he was a man of genius; but his genius did not reveal itself — to me at least — in his face or in his words. He spoke in a thin, clear, almost shrill tone, and with much apparent *bonhomie*.

After a little commonplace conversation about the city, its improvements, approaches, etc., the prophet voluntarily went on to speak of himself, his system, and his calumniators. His talk soon flowed into a kind of monologue, and was indeed a curious rhapsody of religion, sentimentality, shrewdness, and egotism. Sometimes several sentences succeeded each other in which his hearers hardly seemed to make out any meaning whatever, and Brigham Young appeared a grotesque

kind of Coleridge. Then, again, in a moment shone a shrewd meaning very distinctly expressed, and with a dash of humour and sarcasm gleaming fantastically amid the Scriptural allusions and the rhapsody of unctuous words. The purport of the whole was that Brigham Young had been misunderstood, misprized, and calumniated, even as Christ had been; that were Christ to appear in New York or London He would be misunderstood, misprized, and calumniated, even as Brigham Young then was; and that Brigham Young was not to be dismayed though the stars in their courses should fight against him. He protested with special emphasis, and, at the same time, special meekness, with eyes half-closed and delicately-modulated voice, against the false reports that any manner of force or influence whatever was, or ever had been, exercised to keep men and women in Salt Lake City against their will. He appealed to the evidence of our own eyes, and asked us if we had not seen for ourselves that the city was free to all to come and go as they would. At this time we had not heard some stories which afterwards came to our ears; but, in any case, the evidence of our eyes could go no farther than to prove that travellers like ourselves were free to enter and depart. We had, however, little occasion to trouble ourselves about answering; for the prophet kept the talk pretty well all to himself. His manner was certainly not that of a man of culture, but it had a good deal of the quiet grace and self-possession of what we call a gentleman. There was nothing loud or vulgar about him. Even when he was most rhapsodical his speech never lost its ease and gentleness of tone. He was bland, benevolent, sometimes quietly pathetic in manner. He presented himself as a victim, but with the air of one who does it

regretfully, and only from a disinterested sense of duty. I began very soon to find that there was no need of troubling myself much to keep up the conversation: that my business was that of a listener: that the prophet conceived himself to be addressing some portion of the English or American press through my humble medium. So I listened and my companion listened, and Brigham Young talked on; and I may acknowledge that we were fast drifting into a hazy mental condition by virtue of which we began to regard the Mormon President as a victim of cruel persecution, a suffering martyr, and an injured angel!

When the interview came to a close, the prophet dismissed us with a fervent and effusive blessing. 'Goodbye — do well, mean well, pray always. Christ be with you, God be with you, God bless you.' All this, and a great deal more to the same effect, was uttered with no vulgar, Mawworm demonstrativeness of tone or gesture, no nasal twang, no uplifted hands; but quietly, earnestly, as if it came unaffectedly from the heart of the speaker. We took leave of Brigham Young, and came away a little puzzled as to whether we had been conversing with an impostor, or a fanatic, a Peter the Hermit, or a Tartuffe. One thing, however, is clear to me. I do not say that Brigham Young was a Tartuffe; but I know now how Tartuffe ought to be played so as to render the part more effective and more apparently natural and lifelike than I have ever seen it on French or English stage.

No one can doubt the sincerity of the homage which the Mormons in general paid to Brigham Young. One man, of the working-class, apparently, with whom I talked at the gate of the Tabernacle, spoke almost with tears in his eyes of the condescension the prophet

always manifested. My informant told me that he was at one time disabled by some hurt or ailment, and the first day that he was able to come into the street again President Young happened to be passing in his carriage, and caught sight of the convalescent. 'He stopped his carriage, sir, called me over to him, addressed me by name, shook hands with me, asked me how I was getting on, and said he was glad to see me out again.' The poor man was as proud of this as a French soldier might have been if the Little Corporal had recognised him and called him by his name. There is no flattery which the great can offer to the humble like this way of addressing the man by his right name, and thus proving that the identity of the small creature has lived clearly in the memory of the great being. Many a renowned commander has endeared himself to the soldiers, whom he regarded and treated only as the instruments of his business, by the mere fact that he took care to remember men's names. They would gladly die for one who could be so nobly gracious, and could thus prove that they were regarded by him as worthy to occupy each a distinct place in his busy mind. The niggardliness and selfishness of John, Duke of Marlborough, the savage recklessness of Claverhouse, were easily forgotten by the poor private soldier whom each commander made it his business, when occasion required, to address correctly by his appropriate name of Tom, Dick, or Harry. Lord Palmerston governed the House of Commons, and most of those outside it with whom he usually came into contact, by just such little arts or courtesies. In one of Messrs. Erckmann-Chatrian's novels we read of a soldier who declares himself ready to go to the death for Marshal Ney, because the Marshal, who originally belonged to the same district as himself,

has just recognised his fellow-countryman and called him by name. But the hero of the novel is somewhat grim and sarcastic, and he thinks it was not so wonderful a condescension that Ney should have recognised an old comrade and called him by his name. Perhaps the hero of the tale had not himself received any such recognition from Ney — perhaps, if it had been vouchsafed to him, he, too, would have been ready to go to the death. Anyhow, this correct calling of names and quick recognition has always been a great power in the governing of men and women. 'Deal you in words,' is the advice of Mephistopheles to the student, in 'Faust,' 'and you may leave others to do the best they can with things.' I was able to appreciate the governing power of Brigham Young all the better when I had heard the expression of this poor Mormon's gratitude and homage to the great President who had shaken hands with him and addressed him promptly and correctly by his name.

I have no intention of entering into any argument or observations tending to show the utter hopelessness of the system which the Mormons endeavoured to set up in the region of Salt Lake City. That system is practically at an end now. The railways and the influx of Gentiles, as they were called, from all parts of the Republic, the growth of enlightenment and the laws of the United States have killed it. I well remember that I was very anxious at the time of my visit to the Mormon community, and for long after, that no attempt should be made to stamp out the system by the mere force of the Federal authority. It seemed to me that anything in the form of a crusade against Mormonism might only tend to a fanatical reaction in its favour; and my conviction was that it would die most easily

when exposed to the full light of public observation, and when placed in comparison and competition with other systems and with better forms of civilisation. I think the events have justified my prediction; Mormonism as a system is dead and buried. I may observe that I have never seen anywhere such melancholy exhibitions of slatternly, hopeless, degraded womanhood as I saw, and could not help seeing, in the Mormon community. On the whole, I think the surprising thing is not that Mormonism accomplished so much good work in the reclamation of the desert soil of Utah as that it accomplished so little. The soil was productive, the climate on the whole remarkably fine and healthy, the scenery beautiful; the outlines of some of the mountains that made the horizon of the city might be compared, in their exquisite beauty, with the mountains of Attica. Nature had done everything for the place; and, at least at the time when I visited Salt Lake City, the hand of man had done marvellously little. I am bound, however, to acknowledge that the progress of civilisation did not fail to make itself apparent in the place, even before the railway had connected it with the outer world. Shortly after my return to Europe I was giving a lecture in the city of Glasgow on the Mormon community, and I mentioned the fact that the streets of the little capital were left after sunset desolate and dark. After I had finished my discourse a gentleman arose in the crowd and informed me that I had failed to do justice to the movement of industrial science in the community, and that the streets of the city were at that time illuminated by gas-lamps. The gentleman who gave us this information turned out to be a secretary of Brigham Young, whom I remember to have met at the time of my visit. He was perfectly right in claiming for his

fellow-citizens the full recognition of the advances they had made in practical science. I make no doubt that before very long the streets of Salt Lake City were irradiated with that electric light which has now, for so many years, been illumining every little town in the New England States. But the gas would no doubt have come to be used all the same, even if the community of Salt Lake City had not been started on the basis of Mormonism. I confess that I was glad to get out of the Mormon region and to travel to the railway line once again, and to make for San Francisco. I have always been glad, however, to have had a chance of seeing Salt Lake City while the power of Brigham Young was still at its height, and to be one of the few who had an opportunity of taking a glimpse at the community before it became swallowed up by the encroaching civilisation. I am glad to have seen Brigham Young himself, a sort of figure which younger sight-seers are not likely to set eyes upon, and to have heard a sermon in the Mormon Tabernacle, and seen a play in the Mormon Theatre. It is, perhaps, worth mentioning that the name of the play as the author wrote it was 'The Wife, a Tale of Mantua,' by James Sheridan Knowles. But it was not so denominated in the Mormon Theatre. No doubt it was thought by Brigham Young, who looked after the theatre, as after every other institution in the place, that a play entitled 'The Wife' would hardly have been suitable for an audience of Mormons. Therefore the drama was brought out in Salt Lake City simply as 'A Tale of Mantua.' The fact reminds one of the facetious story told by Artemus Ward about the stage manager who produced 'The Lady of Lyons,' in the Salt Lake City Theatre. The play was a dead failure, and it was explained to the manager that the audience

could not understand the notion of so much fuss being made about a single Pauline. The shrewd manager, according to Artemus Ward, took the hint, brought out the 'Lady of Lyons' next night with fifteen Paulines, and the play had a successful run.

I met a Mormon elder during my stay in the city who was very civil to me, and asked me if I had made the acquaintance of a well-known citizen whom he named. I said that I had not the honour of knowing the gentleman in question. 'Oh, but,' he promptly answered, 'he is a man whom you ought to know, as you come from England, for he is married to three such charming English girls.' I am afraid that the announcement did not make me particularly eager to start an acquaintance with the citizen thus fortunate in his matrimonial arrangements. May I add one statement of fact which I tell with a certain feeling of pride, not to say of self-glorification? My wife and I were actively and successfully engaged in a little conspiracy to help in the escape of a young Lancashire lass who had been induced, by the preachings of Mormon apostles and emissaries in England, to seek for prosperity in Utah. She had been a servant in a Liverpool lodging-house; she was told nothing about the Mormon system, and was tempted to go out to Utah only by the assurances that she could find lucrative employment and a wealthy marriage there. I know of my own knowledge that while as a young man I was living in Liverpool, the Mormon emissaries constantly preached there about the prosperity of the Mormon country, and said nothing about its polygamous system. The poor girl we met in Salt Lake City no sooner found out what the system was than she set her heart upon escaping and returning to her own coun-

try. She succeeded in accomplishing her escape, a difficult and perilous act in those days, and if in helping her to escape we made a bad return for the hospitality and the blessing of Brigham Young I can only say that it would be idle for me now to proclaim myself a penitent.

CHAPTER XVI

A FITZROY SQUARE BOHEMIA

SOMEWHERE about the middle of 1871 I settled down again in London. I had paid a hasty visit to England in 1870, and arrived just in time to see the outbreak of the war between France and Prussia. A friend told me that he was standing in the lobby of the House of Commons one evening near to Mr. Cardwell, afterwards Lord Cardwell, and Mr. Grant-Duff, now Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant-Duff, when the news came that war had been declared between the two rival Powers. 'That,' said Mr. Cardwell, who was then Secretary at War, 'means the French in Berlin in six weeks.' Mr. Grant-Duff's comment was, 'It means the Prussians in Paris in six months.' Grant-Duff was a man who had the great merit of never expressing an opinion on any subject unless when he thoroughly understood what he was talking about. According to my judgment, he never made the impression upon the House of Commons which his abilities and his information ought to have enabled him to make. He reminded me in many ways of Sir George Cornewall Lewis, because of his keen philosophic intellect, his immense information, and the close study which he gave to any subject in which he felt interested. He had studied Continental politics on the spot, if I may use such an expression: he had made such a study of them as Sir

Charles Dilke has made of Europe and of other continents as well. Grant-Duff had taken heed of the rising strength of Prussia, and of the position to which she was approaching in the political world; and had predicted clearly enough, long before the event, the possibility and the results of a contest between Imperial France and Prussia. I remained in England until after Sedan and the fall of the Empire; and received on arriving in New York the news of the surrender of Metz. Up to the time of the first great defeat of the French, the general opinion in England had been that the armies of Louis Napoleon would make their way to Berlin; and those who held the opinions of Grant-Duff were in as small a minority as they were who, after the battle of Bull Run, still believed that the cause of the North was destined to prevail in the great American Civil War. By the time I had settled down again in London the war was over, and the reign of the Commune was over; and the Emperor Napoleon was an exile at Chislehurst; and the Tuileries was a heap of ruins; and M. Thiers was President of the French Republic; and the Republican Parliament was sitting at Versailles.

I went back to literary work and to journalism in London, and I joined the staff of the 'Daily News' as a writer of leading articles. The 'Daily News' had made a splendid reputation for itself during the French and Prussian War, under the bold and brilliant management of my friend Sir John Robinson, who had, among other successes, discovered the genius of Archibald Forbes as a war correspondent, and induced Henry Labouchere to write the diary of a besieged resident in Paris. I joined the staff of the 'Daily News' on the invitation of my friend Mr. Frank H. Hill, then and

for many years afterwards editor of the paper. Mr. Hill soon became known to the public as the author of 'Political Portraits' and the 'Political Adventures of Lord Beaconsfield,' two sets of sketches alive with marvellous pen portraiture, and with a vividness of sarcasm which never flashed a false light.

As I am not writing chapters of history, but only giving a series of more or less connected reminiscences, I may be allowed to indulge in some recollections of a charming social, literary, and artistic life which began for me somewhere about this time, and is likely to last in my memory until the end. I speak of a sort of London Bohemia which began to arise in the region of Fitzroy Square. I had known, in my earlier days, something of a London Bohemia of a different kind, more nearly akin to that Parisian Bohemia the scenes of whose life Henri Murger has described in immortal chapters. The London Bohemia which I first knew was of the regular old-fashioned sort belonging to the realms of Fleet Street, and was made up of young newspaper writers, young painters, young actors, and meant, for the most part, late hours of conviviality, much beer, much brandy and soda, many cigars, unlimited tobacco, a good deal of temporary poverty, a common faculty for running into debt, and that common tie which I think I cannot better describe than as the bond of 'poor devilship.' That was the ordinary sort of Bohemia about which, perhaps, too much has been written of late years. It had no very great harm in it, so far as I could see; and, rest its soul, respectability and better pay have killed it long ago. But the Fitzroy Square Bohemia of which I come to speak, was something wholly different in its origin and its character. It had nothing to do with drink, or debt, or dissipation; it defied no social

laws; it made no affectation of being in any sense worse than its respectable neighbours. I have called it the Fitzroy Square Bohemia, because Fitzroy Square and the surrounding region became its home, for the reason that Fitzroy Square and that quarter were then the home of many painters and sculptors, authors and actors, journalists and politicians. It had no rules, no organisation, no name; it never thought of calling itself a Bohemia, or calling itself anything else; and it is only of late years, and looking back upon it from a considerable distance of time, that I have come to see how truly it was an artistic Bohemia, in the best sense of the word. It was an undefined association constructed out of the chance companionship of many men and women professionally engaged in art, or letters, or politics; men and women, most of them young, most of them beginners, all enthusiasts in their several ways, and guided by the kindly, friendly leadership of men whom fame or fortune, or both fame and fortune, had found out, and who were willing to give their younger companions all the benefit of their sympathy, their encouragement, and their influence. The one essentially Bohemian characteristic of that particular Bohemia was the fact that it did not seek after the world of society, although it made welcome any comers from society who sought its companionship, who had brains and education enough to be able to appreciate it, and who did not put on any airs of patronage when they came within its sphere. The Fitzroy Square Bohemia, as I have taken the liberty of calling it, has dispersed long ago; some of its leading members are dead, most of those who survive have migrated westward, some of those who were then youngsters have since become oldsters and are enjoying distinction in their various

ways, some are absorbed into society itself, and some have fallen out of the ranks altogether and are forgotten. A satirical friend, once a member of that bright Bohemia, told me not long since, with a smile, that there is an understanding amongst its members who are now living in fashionable West End streets, that when they meet at dinners or evening parties there is to be no allusion to the old days of Fitzroy Square and Gower Street and the Regent's Park. But I think I am warranted in utterly repelling this ignoble suggestion, and in expressing the belief that all who remember those old days remember them with pleasure and with pride, and are no more ashamed of having once been poor and been located in a cheap quarter than they are ashamed of having once been young and been hopeful seekers after a vague and distant success. Some of the painters have won fame since that far-off time; some of the authors, who were then only beginning, are toasted at great public festivals now; some of the young actors have become famous all over the world; some of the young journalists are now editors; some of the young politicians have been Cabinet Ministers since then.

My earliest memories of those pleasant days are associated with the name and the family and the Fitzroy Square home of the late Ford Madox Brown, who may be called the founder of the pre-Raphaelite school of painters, although nothing could have been farther from the mind of Madox Brown than any idea of founding a school or recognising the principle that true art can ever be founded on any set of pedantic canons or dogmas. Madox Brown was a genuine artist, if ever there was one; and the thought would never have entered into his original and expansive mind that any group of young painters should be taught to believe

that they could cultivate themselves in art by going to work to imitate his methods and his manners. Nobody ever was more thoroughly convinced, or more strongly expressed his conviction, than Madox Brown, that a great artist must follow the bent of his own genius, and must not believe that he can paint pictures or carve statues worthy of an art gallery by copying the works of other men. Madox Brown's only son, Oliver, was, I think, the most highly gifted and promising youth I have ever known. When he was but in his eighteenth year, Oliver Madox Brown had a picture hung on line in the Royal Academy, and soon after, he published a novel called 'Gabriel Denver,' which impressed the novel-reading public with the idea that an absolutely fresh and original force had come up in English fiction. His premature death, just as he seemed entering on a path of fame, was a terrible blow to the father, whose life seemed, to most of us who knew him, to be almost wholly bound up in the career of his gifted son. Madox Brown, however, did not succumb to the stroke; he took up the broken threads of his life and endeavoured to knit them together; he lived for his family, and for his work, and for his wide human interests. There used to be a sort of artistic impression at that time — more common than it is now, I hope and believe — that the true worker in art must withdraw himself as much as possible from the common interests of the outer world, and must live in a rarefied atmosphere of his own, undisturbed by all considerations relating to political and social progress. Madox Brown never acknowledged any creed of this kind; there was no good cause, there was no movement concerning human interests and human civilisation which failed to have his earnest sympathies, and, where he could give it, his

practical support. When I came to know him first his home was a kind of open house for all who had any interest in art or, indeed, in anything that concerned the welfare of humanity. At that time his home was not yet darkened by any calamity. One of his daughters was married to William Michael Rossetti, the art critic, brother of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, poet and painter; the other to Franz Hueffer, musical critic for the 'Times' newspaper, a man who could write brilliant articles for English, French, and German reviews. William Rossetti and his wife lived quite near to Madox Brown; Franz Hueffer and his wife but a little way off. At Madox Brown's house I met many men and women of rising distinction, and some who had already acquired fame. There I met, for the first time, Algernon Charles Swinburne, and Edwin Long, the painter, whose life was cut off too soon for the full development of his genius, and Mrs. Lynn Linton, the novelist who has but lately died, and W. J. Stillman, and many others whose acquaintanceship it was something to have made.

Gradually we got into the way of having pleasant social and artistic gatherings at each other's houses; and we formed a sort of discussion society, the object of which was to have a lecture by some one of the company on some subject in which he was interested, and afterwards to talk it over, interchange views upon it, and debate each other's views in a manner just formal enough not to be careless and slipshod, and yet not so formal as to deter diffident people from getting up and expressing their ideas. Everybody who had anything to say rose from his seat and said it, and was listened to with the fullest attention until he had brought his remarks to a close. We did not encourage long

speeches, and we did not encourage any attempt at display; but we desired as far as was possible to get the opinions of everybody, and to prevail even upon the least practised speakers to get up and give us their thoughts on the subject under discussion. I can remember many animated debates taking place; and I can bring back to recollection some bright extemporaneous speeches. Kegan Paul, the author and publisher, often took part in our discussions, and so did Forbes Robertson, who afterwards became famous as an actor, and whose Hamlet has been one of the triumphs of the modern English stage. Henry W. Lucy, of the 'Daily News' and 'Punch,' was occasionally induced to try his hand at a speech, and made it clear to his audience that he could amuse and instruct by talking as well as by writing. Many ladies, of course, attended our debates; but I do not remember that we ever succeeded in prevailing upon any one of them to take public part in our discussions. Mathilde Blind, stepdaughter of Karl Blind, the German political exile, was one of the constant attendants at our meetings—she was then entering on that brilliant literary career which was cut short by death. Madame Darmesteter, authoress of 'The Life of Renan,' was often with us. She was then Miss Mary F. Robinson; and she and her novelist sister, Mabel Robinson, were seldom absent from our pleasant gatherings.

Sometimes we had large parties to which visitors were freely invited from the outer public. I remember that at the house of one of us, in Gower Street, men like Sir Charles Dilke, and the late Lord O'Hagan, Frank H. Hill, Sir John Robinson, James Payn, William Black, Edward Jenkins, Hepworth Dixon, Charles Gibbon, Leonard Courtney, the late James Macdonell (one of the leader-writers of the 'Times'), Edward D. J. Wilson

(another leader-writer of the 'Times'), Edmund Gosse, the late Professor Minto, William Allingham, Arthur O'Shaughnessy, Henry Kingsley, and ever so many other men, whose names were well known in letters and in politics, were frequent visitors. If there was any one central idea in forming those gatherings at all, it was the idea that they should consist as far as possible of men and women known in letters, politics, and art — men and women whose names, to adopt Henri Murger's expressive phrase, 'were in the playbill.' Some agreeable nobodies no doubt were there; but they were always nobodies who made themselves agreeable, and did not give themselves airs. Those were bright gatherings; and those were genial times; and I do not know whether there is now any quarter of London in which people of the same kind are habitually and so frequently brought together. Death broke up some of the households where such receptions were most familiar. Madox Brown left London for a long time, and established himself in Manchester, where he was engaged to paint a great series of frescos for the adornment of the Town Hall; and his withdrawal made a decided blank in our social arrangements, for, as I have said, his home in Fitzroy Square was the starting point of the whole undefined organisation. Cecil Lawson, a young man who promised to be one of the foremost of English landscape painters, was cut off in the very springtime of his fame. Some of the groups became more and more absorbed into journalism, and some into political life; and as I have already said, many migrated to the West End; and although one can come from the West End to the region of Fitzroy Square to attend a big reception now and then, yet you cannot casually drop in several times a week on social gatherings in the

Fitzroy Square regions if you have to come all the way from Mayfair and to go back all the same way again. Therefore our debating coterie gradually dispersed itself and broke up, and soon became a memory. For myself, I can say that it has always remained one of my most delightful memories, and that I can still recall to recollection bright things that were said, odd paradoxes that were started, and sparkling sarcasms that were tossed about in those nights of extemporaneous and unambitious discussion which began in the early seventies and ceased to flourish long before the seventies had drawn to their close.

Perhaps in association with this general subject I may say something about that æsthetic movement which was going on in London during a great part of that time. That æsthetic movement, or craze, or whatever it may be called, is well-nigh forgotten by the general public now; but it never can be quite forgotten, so long as people keep to the habit — and a very sensible and amusing habit it is — of consulting the back volumes of 'Punch.' For 'Punch' has fixed the æsthetic movement with satires in pen and pencil that can never lose their vital power. The æsthetic movement is supposed to have come in some sort of way out of the pre-Raphaelite movement; but it was certainly a most curious distortion of all the principles and purposes of pre-Raphaelite art. The idea, consciously or unconsciously cherished in the mind of the æsthete, evidently was, that if he could not make himself an artist, he could at least make himself a curiosity. Young men and women, and, indeed, men and women who were not young, but were quite old enough to have known better, seemed to be under the impression that art can be put on like a garment, and that you have only to bedizen yourself in a certain way, move with a certain gait, and talk in a

certain jargon, in order to make yourself an object of public wonder and admiration. The æsthetic lady of those days, in her clinging draperies of pallid colour, was one of the social oddities whose figure 'Punch' was never weary of reproducing. The æsthetic young man affected soft, broad-brimmed hats and low collars and fantastic neckties and velvet coats. I confess that my own sympathy went with the æsthetic young man in so far as the courageous substitution of the soft hat for the high far-shining 'chimney-pot' was concerned; but I could not share his happy faith that the adoption of any manner of headgear can convert a brainless young man into a poet or a painter.

The æsthetic movement was, in fact, a sort of unwholesome after-birth of the pre-Raphaelite movement. Dante Rossetti and Swinburne had found new channels for English poetry, as Dante Rossetti had for English painting, and the unknown followers of these masters thought they had only to imitate their mannerisms in order to become masters themselves. Swinburne had astonished the world by some of his more audacious poems, which were, indeed, the splendid, startling paradoxes of a man of genius. The imitators who professed to belong to his school seemed to think that the true business of art was to shock and to startle. There was, of course, a school of Rossetti and of Burne Jones, and a school of Swinburne and of Morris; but it is only right to say that neither of these men claimed or wanted to found a school, or gave any countenance to the doctrine that art can live upon imitation. Dante Rossetti painted as he felt and as he knew, wrote poems as he felt and as he knew; Swinburne gave out in verse the untaught feelings of his own soul, the impulses of his own temperament; and each man did as he did, because

he could not help it, and because that was the law of his life. The painters who copied Dante Rossetti did nothing more than to reproduce in feeble, shadowy imitation the forms which Rossetti made living and real. Most of the younger poets who imitated Swinburne went in at last for shocking and for startling, and for nothing else. 'Miracle-working pictures,' said Goethe, 'are seldom works of art'; and the poets who thought they could be Swinburnes simply by trying to work miracles of convulsion and hysteria, only gave to the world verses which succeeding days have declined to recognise as works of art. Some of Swinburne's poems undoubtedly shocked the ordinary reader; but the young men who tried to imitate Swinburne seemed to have got it into their heads that in order to be like him they had no need to do anything more than to simply shock the ordinary reader. So they went on shocking and shocking the ordinary reader more and more, until at last the usual effect was produced, and the ordinary reader got tired of being shocked, soon ceased to be shocked at all, and before long ceased to read.

It was a curious craze while it lasted. One used to meet young men of good character and blameless life whose ambition it seemed to be to make themselves out in verse as the predetermined breakers of every sort of recognised human law. Some of these young fellows, who in their homes were recognised as exemplary sons and brothers, whose parents had no fault to find with their ordinary goings on, whose sisters regarded them with affectionate confidence, went rampaging about in their verse as though the sole divinities of their worship were lust and cruelty. Of course, the preposterous craze wore itself out at last, and society went along its old ways unheeding; but I am sorry to say that the

craze did not wear itself out before it had eaten into and worn out the noblest part of some lives that might, but for it, have been fruitful and honoured. 'Bohemia,' said Henri Murger, 'is not an institution, but a malady.' That peculiar species of æstheticism to which I am now alluding, was not an institution, but a malady. Æstheticism in general was, of course, but a harmless whim, even where it did not succeed in giving us new and fresh lamps for fading and flickering old ones.

The pre-Raphaelite movement out of which the æsthetic movement developed itself in some curious way, will be always remembered because of the great painters and great poets whom it left to us, and because of the better style of structure and of ornament which it introduced into our streets and our houses. Dante Rossetti, Madox Brown, Burne Jones, Swinburne, William Morris: these are names which will always be remembered in our literature and our art; and it is no fault of these genuine artists if feebler creatures imitated them, and unconsciously parodied them and burlesqued them. Burke's saying has passed into a proverb about the contortions of the Sibyl; but as long as the Sibyl had the inspiration, men listened to her voice and recognised her teaching. It was curious to notice, at the very time, how little the æsthetic mania affected the general bulk of social life, even in London. In certain circles you met it everywhere; the higher and graver regions of art were little troubled by its presence, but the imitators of art and the precocious youngsters of art took it with them wherever they went. Those sections of West End society which went in for patronising art and literature were easily enough induced to welcome the young æsthetes of both sexes, and to consider them an amusing feature of a great evening reception. But

in the more solemn and conventional drawing-rooms of the higher society the æsthetes made no show at all. At the time when the movement was at its highest I heard a 'noble duke,' who is a Member of the present Government, declare that he had never seen one solitary specimen of the æsthetic woman as pictured so often in the pages of 'Punch.' He had been longing to meet her, he said, because he had seen her so often pictured in those lively pages; but his wish had never been gratified by a single glimpse of her in all the intercourse of his daily life. Most of the company who were present when this declaration was made seemed astonished at it; but the noble statesman held firmly to his position, and said that one of the desires of his recent life had been baulked by the fact that the lady with the clinging draperies of pallid hue, bearing lilies in her hand, had never yet, go where he would, shown herself on his horizon. Yet, not only had 'Punch' held the æsthetes up week after week for the amusement of the public, but there had been whole novels written to depict them and to satirise them; and after a time the genius and the humour of W. S. Gilbert, combined with the music of Arthur Sullivan, served to bring the passing fashion home to every mind, and to immortalise it. The æsthetic movement will not be remembered by reason of the novels which were written about it, some of which, indeed, were written at too early a stage of its history, and, perhaps, with a too minute observance of its oddities, to make at the time any impression on the outer world; but if there were any chance of its passing into utter oblivion, we may feel assured that it will be rescued from that unkindly fate so long as men and women read the back volumes of 'Punch,' or follow the music and the humours of 'Patience.'

CHAPTER XVII

CROSSING THE BAR

In the meantime a new political development was making itself manifest in Ireland, which was destined to affect the interests of Great Britain as well, and to absorb much of the attention of Parliament. After the failure of the Young Ireland movement of 1848, there had come a sort of stagnation in the political life of Ireland. Some earnest Irish Nationalists, like Charles Gavan Duffy, John Francis Maguire, and George Henry Moore, still expressed in the House of Commons the National sentiments of the Irish people; but their energies and their efforts were confined for the most part to an improvement of the Irish Land System, and were not directed in any organised fashion to a reconstruction of Ireland's political government. The Repeal movement had died with O'Connell; the Young Ireland movement ended in failure; men like John Sadleir had brought discredit on the Irish National cause by using it for the purposes of a band of self-seeking adventurers in politics and finance. That which we know as the Home Rule movement had not come into existence — the very name of Home Rule was unknown. At last a change came, partly owing to the irrepressible working of Irish public opinion, and partly to the energy and the eloquence of one man. That man was Isaac Butt, under whose inspiration the Home

Rule movement thus named became a Parliamentary influence.

Isaac Butt was a remarkable man; he had had a most liberal education at the University of Dublin; he was an accomplished scholar; he had been a Professor of Political Economy; and rose to a foremost place at the Irish Bar. He was a Protestant; and through all his early life was the advocate of strong Conservative or Tory opinions, and first became conspicuous in Ireland as an opponent to Daniel O'Connell on the subject of Repeal of the Union. A brilliant advocate at the Bar, he was at once a commanding and persuasive speaker on the platform. When the English Protectionists attempted a kind of reactionary movement against free-trade, Isaac Butt, then a proclaimed Anti-free-trader, was invited to stand for the English borough of Harwich. He had already made himself known as a powerful declaimer at some of the Anti-free-trade meetings held in Drury Lane Theatre and in other great public buildings. Butt was elected for Harwich; and signalised his entrance into the House of Commons by a fierce attack on Richard Cobden. During these years, however, a change was coming over his political sentiments; he had always, even when an orator on English free-trade platforms and the representative of an English constituency in the House of Commons been above all things an Irishman; and he was engaged to defend Thomas Francis Meagher at the Special Commission in Clonmel after the failure of the Young Ireland insurrection. Much later still, he defended many of the prisoners concerned in the Fenian movement; and the force of his own advocacy seems gradually to have brought him into sympathy with the political cause if not with the actual methods of the men whom he was

defending. In the early seventies he identified himself with the national claims of the Irish people, and he may be said to have founded the Home Rule movement.

Isaac Butt was a man of extraordinary gifts and of an extraordinary temperament. In his personal habits he was thoughtless and undisciplined to a degree which would have been considered too much even for the typical Irishman of the stage and of Charles Lever's novels. But when he had a political object in view he could follow it up, for a time at least, with unflinching courage and unconquerable patience. He was a man of commanding personal stature, with a face capable of the most varying expression, and eyes that could suggest every emotion — pathetic, passionate, rollicking, roystering. His features certainly were not chiselled after any classic mould: ill-natured persons said that he looked like a white negro; and undoubtedly the ill-mannered phrase had a certain meaning and appropriateness in it. I had known Isaac Butt since the time when, as a mere boy, I had heard him pour forth his magnificent declamation before the judges and the jury in the Court House at Clonmel. While I was editing the 'Morning Star' in London, Butt used to come to the offices of the paper sometimes to talk over Irish questions, because he knew that the 'Morning Star' was always in favour of fair play to Ireland. A curious recollection occurs to my mind in connection with one of Butt's visits. It was while some of the trials of the Fenian prisoners were still going on in Ireland; and Butt wished to bring to the notice of the English public some irregularities in the conduct of those trials on the part of the Crown which he contended would never be tolerated in an English court of criminal law. At my suggestion, Butt put his views into the form of a letter

addressed to the 'Morning Star,' which, for obvious reasons, was not signed with his name. A London evening journal, which was an advocate of Tory opinions in general, and had been consistently anti-Northern during the American Civil War, had a leading article which was full of facetiousness on the subject of the anonymous letter to the 'Morning Star,' and which declared that the writer of the letter must be as utterly ignorant of Irish as he was of English courts of justice. Butt was at that time the leading advocate at the Irish Bar.

Butt soon came forward prominently in Irish public life; and entered the House of Commons as the representative of an Irish constituency, and as the leader of the newly-formed Home Rule Party. He gathered around him a number of able young Irishmen, fresh to Parliamentary life, and delighted at the opportunity of taking part in a new agitation for the Irish National cause. Butt, however, did not prove quite equal to the work; he was sinking into years; he had wasted his iron constitution between over-work and over-relaxation. He was not quite in tone with the younger Ireland which was then growing up. He had a deep and ingrained respect for the House of Commons and all its forms and methods. His highest ambition, I think, would have been to win recognition and approval in that House by a firm but temperate advocacy of the Irish political cause. He was much pleased when Disraeli paid him a compliment, and highly gratified when the Government deferred to his authority, so far as to grant him a night for the discussion of his motion on Home Rule. The younger and more impatient Irishmen who formally acknowledged his leadership, began to say among themselves that Butt was rather too old-

fashioned for his post, and that the officials on the Treasury Bench could always disarm him by the tribute of an occasional compliment. In 1875 a new figure and an entirely new force came into the House of Commons: Mr. Charles Stewart Parnell was elected as representative for the County of Meath, in succession to John Martin, one of the rebels of 1848, who had just died; and with Parnell's coming there came a new and memorable chapter of events in the history of the House of Commons.

I shall naturally have a good deal more to say in these reminiscences about Parnell and his career, and I only make this sudden incursion into politics just now because it serves to open a fresh chapter of my personal recollections. It had seemed to me for some time that the new Home Rule movement had life and promise in it; and that the resolve to make the House of Commons the platform from which to appeal to the justice and the sympathy of the English people was likely to prove itself the true method to bring about success. I had said as much as this in writings and in speeches; and I was getting to be known in Ireland as one of the London Irishmen from whom fidelity to the National cause might fairly be expected. Suddenly I received an invitation to offer myself as candidate for a vacancy which had arisen in the County of Longford, Ireland, by the death of its former representative. The circumstances under which I received the invitation were somewhat peculiar and odd. We were fond of private theatricals in our Fitzroy Square Bohemia, and on one particular night, in our house, a number of young friends were venturing on a performance of Shakespeare's 'Love's Labour 's Lost.' I had undertaken no higher part in the representation than that of a sort of

unofficial stage-manager and general helper to the company. As the play was about to begin I received a telegram pressing me to come over to Longford and offer myself as candidate at once. I answered the appeal by crossing over to Ireland as soon as the train bound for Holyhead could convey me. My election was unopposed, and I returned in a few days as Member for the County of Longford.

The first English Member who welcomed me on my entrance into the House of Commons was the late Henry Fawcett. I saw him in the lobby of the House before entering to take the oath and my seat; and he said to me, in his loud, cheery voice, 'Well, McCarthy, I am not in favour of Home Rule, but I am going into the House to give you a cheer when you come to take your seat.' So he did, and gave me a good hearty cheer; I could hear his voice distinctly amongst the voices of others. I had known Henry Fawcett for some time before I had seriously thought of becoming a Member of Parliament; and, indeed, he had presented me with a copy of his 'Manual of Political Economy,' bearing some kindly written words on its titlepage. It was my melancholy duty, many years afterwards, to express, on behalf of the Irish National Party, our concurrence in the tribute which was passed by the House of Commons, when his early death was made known. Fawcett was one of the ablest, the most upright, and the most stout-hearted men I have ever met. The manner in which he bore up against his terrible affliction gave all who knew him a higher impression of human nature than they might have had before. He was a man of great strength of body as well as of mind, and he delighted in all manner of open-air exercises, especially in riding, rowing, and mountain climbing. As everyone knows,

he was deprived of sight for life by a terrible calamity during a shooting-party — a calamity all the more terrible because it was caused by an accidental discharge from his own father's gun, the powder from the barrel flashing across his eyes. He was thus left to face a life of total darkness just at the opening of his career of energetic manhood. Fawcett told me himself that when he first rallied from the sense of something like utter annihilation which followed the accident, his one main idea was so to comport himself that his father never should know how deeply he felt the loss he had sustained. With this purpose fully possessing his heart and his mind, he was enabled to bear up against a privation which might otherwise have been utterly crushing. Even in the most dismal days, when the trouble was yet new to him, it might be said of him, as Tennyson says of Enoch Arden, that 'he was not all unhappy . . . his resolve sustained him.'

Fawcett steadily went in for making the best use he could of the faculties that were left to him, and for leading an active and a useful life. He had a great capacity for public lecturing and speaking; he had been a deep student of political economy, a disciple of John Stuart Mill, but with ideas of his own; and he laid himself out for political life. His father helped him in every way, only too glad that his son should have ample opportunity of employing his mental and physical energy, and Fawcett soon became a Member of the House of Commons. He at once distinguished himself in the House by his mastery of many great questions in politics and economics. He had a tall form, an impressive appearance, and a powerful voice. He was the first blind Member of the House of Commons known to my time; other Members since his entrance into Parliament have

appeared there under the same privation. Whenever he wished to leave the House (I mean the actual debating chamber) in order to pass into one of the lobbies, or to go into the library, or the dining-room, or the smoking-room, any Member who happened to be nearest to him took his arm and led him whither he desired to go. On one of the first occasions when he was thus kindly conducted his guide seemed especially careful and anxious about him, and took a great deal of trouble in conducting him safely on his way. There was something about the manner of the guide which seemed to Fawcett markedly kind and genial; and when he had reached the place he wanted, he said to his companion, 'I am afraid I do not know your name.' 'Yet you have heard it often,' was the reply, delivered in a deep-toned voice; 'my name is Disraeli.' Fawcett soon became very quick at recognising voices, and a single word from anyone with whom he was acquainted was always enough to enable him to identify his guide. I remember that when I came into the House one evening Fawcett was making a speech on some question connected with India — a subject in which he always took the deepest interest — and, as not uncommonly happened in those days when a discussion on India was going on, there were but few occupants of the benches on either side. I dropped into a seat two rows of benches behind him, and while he was going on with his speech I was impressed by the force and the appositeness of something he said, and I murmured a 'hear, hear.' The speech came to an end soon after, and when Fawcett sat down he suddenly turned his head towards the place where I was sitting and called out, 'McCarthy, have you seen David Wedderburn anywhere in the House to-night?' My two spoken words had been enough to make him

assured of my identity, as if he had eyes and had seen me.

I have known more than one blind man who had a greater aptitude for making his way about a house, or about any public place to which he was at all accustomed, than Fawcett ever seemed to attain. I met once, in an American town, a famous blind preacher, the Rev. Mr. Milburn, who had an extraordinary gift of this kind. He dined in a great old-fashioned house where I was also dining, and to which he, as well as I, was, until that day, an utter stranger. He was conducted up the stairs into the drawing-room, and when dinner was announced it fell to his lot to give his arm to the lady of the house. She naturally offered to conduct him, but he said he was sure of his way and he escorted her as any man possessed of sight would have done; and I heard him say to her as they went down the stairs, 'I like these old-fashioned houses with their great broad staircases.' I knew a school teacher in London who sometimes made you forget that he was blind by the readiness with which he found his way up and down the stairs of any house with which he had any sort of previous acquaintance. It did not seem to me that Henry Fawcett was ever particularly fortunate in this way; but the manner in which his developed sense of hearing enabled him to distinguish between one person and another at the least utterance of a word was something marvellous. He had got into a curious way of speaking as if he saw things, not as one who has been told of them by those who could see. I have often observed that when he was making a speech towards the close of a sitting, he would suddenly turn his face in the direction of the clock in front of the Peers' and Distinguished Strangers' Gallery and would say, 'At this late hour,

Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to prolong the debate much farther,' as if he had actually seen the clock, and been warned by it of the movement of time. During one Session I had met with an accident, and was going about the House with my neck enveloped in a thick scarf. I saw Fawcett rise from his seat while the debate was going on, and I went towards him, took his arm, led him out of the House, and asked him whither he wished to go. He told me, and then suddenly added, 'I see that you have your neck wrapped up in a scarf, I hope nothing serious is the matter with you?' Of course someone had told him that I was thus enveloped, and Fawcett had alluded to my trouble just as he might have done long years before when he was able to use his own eyes. As most people know, Fawcett was prevented by his infirmity alone from becoming a Cabinet Minister. It was not thought proper to receive any man into the Cabinet who could not read with his own eyes the most confidential documents that might have to be entrusted to his department.

Despite his terrible privation, Fawcett must be said to have passed on the whole a happy life — a life full of the activity which he loved, and from which his own indomitable strength of mind enabled him to extract happiness under whatever conditions. He told me himself, that, unlike some other blind men, he was glad not to have been born blind — glad to have enjoyed for so many years the inestimable blessing of sight. For, as he explained, he had seen paintings and statues, and noble works of architecture, and seas and rivers, and plains, and mountains of immortal beauty; and the memory was not only an abiding joy in itself, but it helped him to realise and appreciate the full meaning of any description given to him of pictures and statues,

and buildings and scenery which he could not see. His life was cheered by the companionship of a devoted wife, and he had friends among all who knew him. His cheery laugh, gladsome as that of a healthy schoolboy, gave one a genuine pleasure to hear; his laugh was as genial and joyous as that of my old friend the late James Payn, who was for so many years a hopeless invalid, a sufferer racked with frequent physical anguish. Fawcett told me more than once that he felt no privation more deeply than that which came from the impossibility of his ever again riding straight across country. He used to ride a good deal, even after his calamity; but, of course, he had always to ride with caution, and under the careful guardianship of some close companion. He always kept up, to a certain extent, his practice of rowing on the river, and he derived keen enjoyment to the last from this familiar exercise. He was fond of travelling, and especially fond of mountain countries and the breath that comes from the mountains. I have always thought it one of the most remarkable signs of his strong, happy, cheerful nature that he could thus take delight in being conducted through those Swiss mountain regions which he had known in the days of his activity and his sight, and which, later, he could not see. Most men, it might have been thought, would have felt a double depression, a deepened melancholy, a sharpened bitterness of regret, when thus conducted helpless and sightless through those scenes of past and lost delight. But it was a part of Fawcett's nature to make the best of everything, to extract from everything some portion of delight, however infinitesimal; not to yield to evils, but, as the Roman poet advises, to go more boldly against them; and, indeed, Fawcett evidently found a healthful joy in

going boldly against them and triumphing over them. I do not know that I have ever met such another illustration as his life presented, of the boy's cheery, audacious, irrepressible hopefulness, combined with the patient, indomitable strength of the man.

Another English Member who came up to offer me his congratulation on my entrance into the House of Commons, was the late Peter Alfred Taylor, then Member for Leicester. Taylor's congratulation, however, took a somewhat curious and whimsical form. He asked me how I felt on my first night's experience of the House of Commons. I told him that I felt a little embarrassed, as one who did not seem as yet quite to belong to the place. He rejoined that, according to his impression, the first night in the House of Commons must be very like the first night in gaol. This, of course, was his fun; but there was, I think, a dash of meaning in it. Peter Taylor never, perhaps, quite took to the House of Commons, although many years of his life were spent there. I fancy he attended the House from a sense of duty, and because he wanted to help in the carrying of certain measures to which his heart and his mind were given; but I think he took it all rather seriously, and never particularly cared for the life of the House. Peter Taylor was at that time a well-known man, a very earnest and advanced Radical, with ability enough to have won for himself a distinct place in the debates of the House if he could have thrown his soul into the joy of the conflict. But I do not believe that he felt any joy in it, and he only cared to speak when he had something to say which he feared might not be brought to the ear of the House if he did not make up his mind to say it. I had known Peter Taylor well before I became a Member of the House of Com-

mons. He was a man of large means, and he delighted in gathering advanced men and women from all countries about him. He and his wife had then a beautiful old-fashioned house, a kind of building looking oddly like an old abbey, with grounds — positively, grounds — about it, and it was only just north of the Park. Here they used to entertain friends from all parts of the world; and I think their chief ambition in arranging their receptions was the honourable ambition to fill their rooms with interesting people. Here I met for the first time many friends whose friendship it is my happiness still to possess. Among these I may mention George Boughton, the distinguished landscape painter. Others there were, like the late Professor Seeley, who have since passed from the earth. The Taylors afterwards removed to one of the flats in the region of Victoria Street; I think the old abbey-like house was pulled down, and its site and the surrounding grounds were turned into 'lots for building.' Peter Taylor did not make much of a name in the House of Commons — never made anything like the name justly and honourably won by his distinguished brother-in-law, James Stansfeld. But Taylor was a man of capacity, and a man of thought, an earnest Radical in the front of every progressive movement; a man who could never be of great account as a partisan, because he cared much more for measures than for party, and the Whips found him immovable unless where his own convictions and conscience combined with the official appeal.

Another of the earliest welcomes I received in the House of Commons came from a very different sort of man, Robert Lowe, as he then was, afterwards Lord Sherbrooke. Lowe had long been a leader-writer on the 'Times,' and had been a newspaper writer in Aus-

tralia; and I suppose it was some feeling of the companionship of journalism which led him to give me a very friendly welcome. Anyhow, he came quite out of his way to give me a welcome, and I most thoroughly appreciated it. I had always heard Lowe described as a very disagreeable, supercilious sort of person, with a rasping tongue and a repelling manner; but I am bound to say that I always found him most genial, kind, and companionable. I had many opportunities of meeting him after I came into the House of Commons, and had never any reason, personally, to modify the favourable impression which his kindly welcome first produced on me. Of course, we had, so far as political questions were concerned, no opinions in common; but then I did not observe that Lowe's political opinions were a burden which he was resolute to carry always with him in the intercourse of daily life. He always gave me, somehow, the impression of a man who was well content with the work he had done, and had no great ambition left in him for further effort. He certainly had had some years of dazzling success in the debates of the House of Commons. He had measured swords with Disraeli, with Bright, and with Gladstone; and in no encounter was it easy to say that he had been worsted. But he had done something more than this: he had held his own during one resplendent Session against Disraeli and Bright and Gladstone united, and he had not been overwhelmed. It seemed to me as if he had then cheerfully retired from the arena, put up his sword, and bidden his soul to be content with what he had accomplished, and run no further risk. I am quite sure that Robert Lowe never really thought that he was the equal, as a Parliamentary orator, of Disraeli, not to say of Gladstone or of Bright. But he was

proud that he had stood up to each of them — to all of them — as the gallant soldier in Walter Scott's novel is proud of having crossed swords with Dunois; and I think Lowe was willing to let his fame rest there. The last time I had any talk with him was on one memorable day when the morning papers had announced that he was about to be made a peer and sent into the House of Lords. I met Lowe in Long Acre — he was sauntering through the street in his dreamy, half-dazed, myope way — and I stopped him, and we got into conversation. I was a little shy at first about asking him concerning the accuracy of the statement made in the paper, but at last I came to the point and put the question whether the statement was true, and whether I might offer my congratulations. He answered, somewhat abruptly, 'Well, yes, the statement is true; but I should think you would know better than to offer me any congratulations.' I am sure he spoke with perfect sincerity. The removal to the House of Lords meant the close of that gladiatorial career which he loved so well and of which he had made so brilliant a success. He well knew, of course, that these triumphs could never be renewed, nor would he have had, I am sure, any inclination to make an attempt at their renewal. Still, it is one thing to sit at rest in the arena, and another thing to be removed from the arena altogether. Lowe seldom spoke in the House of Lords, and must have found the atmosphere of the place sadly uncongenial. His career in any case was over; his health soon began to fail, both mind and body sank into weakness. I came upon him now and then at great social receptions, where he was conducted about by loving guidance, to all outward seeming without any interest in the scene, and hardly recognising the figures in the crowd around him.

CHAPTER XVIII

GEORGE ELIOT

On December 22, 1880, an event occurred which cast a gloom over the reading public of the whole civilised world. This is no extravagance of expression, for it was on that day George Eliot died. I came to know George Eliot when she was living at her house called The Priory, North Bank, Regent's Park. My acquaintance with her was made through her husband, George Henry Lewes, and him I had come to know through my old friend E. F. S. Pigott, who has been already mentioned in these reminiscences. Pigott was a colleague of mine on the political and literary staff of the 'Daily News,' then under the editorship of Frank H. Hill. He was a man of varied culture and great ability, and had friends in every field of literature. He lived a bachelor life in an old-fashioned little dwelling at South Bank, Regent's Park; and it might have been a lonely bachelor life, but that Pigott was always busily engaged in newspaper work, or else enjoying himself at the theatres and in society. In his house I first met George Lewes; and through George Lewes I was introduced to George Eliot. I had known much of George Eliot before that time, not merely as an authoress, for of course everybody knew her in that way; but I had heard of her from my friend Dr. John Chapman, editor of the 'Westminster Review,' with whom she worked for a long time as as-

distant editor, and at whose house she first met George Lewes.

George Eliot used to receive her friends at The Priory on Sundays during a great part of the year. She lived a secluded life, so far as the general public was concerned, and only welcomed her own immediate circle of friends and those who, like myself, were brought to her notice by some special introduction. At her house I met such men as Herbert Spencer, Professor Huxley, Professor Tyndall, Emanuel Deutsch, and many others whose genius guided them into the realms of philosophic and scientific thought. Poets came there too, and historians and novelists, and, indeed, I do not believe that any society could have brought together in our time, or perhaps in any other time, a group of figures more justly distinguished than those which were to be seen at George Eliot's Sunday afternoon gatherings. Everyone who reads books and is interested in great authors is acquainted with the features and lineaments of George Eliot — that long, pale, colourless face, with its clearly-cut outlines — a face not beautiful, indeed, but full of that intellectual expressiveness which appeals to every mind and heart. George Eliot had a sweet sympathetic voice, with a certain melancholy in its cadence which rested like music on the ear. Her object, apparently, in her Sunday gatherings, was to get all her guests to talk and to relieve the newer visitors from the awkwardness of a silent shyness. She did not do much of the talking herself, but she always listened with the closest attention, and gently intervened whenever any pause took place, either for the sake of carrying on the old conversation, or of taking care that some new subject should be presented to the group. It seemed to be no part of her desire that the talk should be exclusively,

or even mainly, about philosophy, or science, or letters, for everything that was going on in the world around appeared to have interest for her, and the most modest among her company was encouraged to offer an opinion, or to tell of an experience. As might naturally be expected, there was a certain quality of fine humour in her way of looking at things and setting them up for observation. Not very long since I read two separate descriptions of George Eliot as a hostess — one written by a man, and one by a woman, both friends of mine, and both engaged in literature — which it amazed me much to read. The two writers, disagreeing in many other things, agreed mainly in their description of George Eliot as a rather overbearing woman, filled with intellectual self-pride, who seemed to delight in domineering over her assembly, and in keeping the greater part of the talk all to herself. I wonder what is the value of historical evidence as to the ways and manners of some great personage in the far-distant past, when we find such contradictory testimony as to the ways and manners of George Eliot, who was living only the other day — testimony given by people who lived in her time and who spoke from their own personal recollection. I can only say that the opinion I formed of George Eliot's manner as an intellectual hostess was curiously the very reverse of that which appears to have been formed by the two writers to whom I have made allusion. No doubt they had as many and as good opportunities of observing for themselves as I had; but I can only speak for myself, and can say that as I have described George Eliot so I always found her, sweet, genial, gracious in manner, quiet and placid in tone, apparently anxious to hear every opinion which the least famous of her guests had to offer, interested in every idea which he or she

ried to put into words. I never was a particularly audacious person, or, so far as I can judge of myself, inclined to thrust my own opinions or experiences upon others; and I am quite certain that when I used to visit George Eliot I had something like a positive veneration for her genius and her intellect, and yet I can well remember that on more than one occasion she made me talk with a fluency which rather surprised myself. I recollect, for example, that on one of her Sundays, having heard that I had made some little personal study of the conditions of Mormon life in Salt Lake City, she drew me out upon the subject, until I found myself discoursing to a group of really famous persons as if I had something new and valuable to tell.

I have often heard it said, too, and read it in magazine sketches, that George Eliot was very unwilling to have any of her books talked about, and was inclined rather to resent the pushfulness of any unlucky person who ventured on such an intrusion. Now, I can easily understand that a woman of George Eliot's thoughtful and somewhat retiring nature would feel put out by the rashness of some visitor who began to inflict upon her a panegyric of her novels, or to pay a superfluous and gushing tribute to her gifts as a writer of books. An acquaintance of mine, formerly a Member of the House of Commons, stopped Disraeli in one of the lobbies during a critical division, and said to him, 'Mr. Disraeli, my wife and my daughters are great admirers of your novels.' Disraeli blandly replied, 'Sir, that is indeed fame.' And the fun of it was that my poor old friend always told the story himself with positive pride, as a proof of Disraeli's affability and thankfulness. Now, I dare say, if my friend had ever been presented to George Eliot, he might have amused her or annoyed her by

some such timely and discriminating tribute to her literary genius. No doubt, George Eliot must have had many times during her fame to repress, more or less gently, some tactless attempt to make her the object of some nobody's vanity and self-conceit, expressing themselves in the unsolicited and unwelcome form of admiration. But I must say that I have heard George Eliot enter courteously and gracefully into talk on one of her own novels, or a character or a passage in one of her own novels, where the talk was justified by something in the occasion, and was suggested by intelligent interest and sympathy. I took my son and daughter, who were then but children, to see George Eliot, and I told them to be sure to remember all about the visits, for that the time would certainly come when they, as grown-up persons, would be proud to remember that George Eliot had received and had spoken to them. The little girl, with the unconscious audacity of childhood, bluntly asked the great authoress which of her novels she herself liked best; and George Eliot sweetly told her that she liked 'Silas Marner' best. And then some grown person struck in to the conversation and we talked about 'Silas Marner,' and George Eliot showed no desire to stop our talk, but good-naturedly joined in and had her say too. The last time I ever saw George Eliot was in St. George's Hall, Portland-place. She went there to see the performance of one of the great Greek classic tragedies by a company of accomplished amateurs — I think the company was composed of young Oxford men, and all the parts were admirably acted, and the play was followed with deep interest by a brilliant audience. It had always been the habit of George Eliot during later years to attend at any great musical performance, and the attraction of these

Greek plays proved, naturally, an allurement to a mind like hers, richly stored with the great literature of the classic days. I am not likely to forget the performance of that Greek tragedy. It must always have, apart from its own intrinsic charm and power, a certain tragic interest for me, in the fact that I saw George Eliot there, and that I never saw her again.

George Lewes was certainly one of the wittiest and most brilliant talkers I have ever met. His quick and fanciful intellect seemed to range over every conceivable variety of subject, and he could adorn the most commonplace topic with vivid and appropriate illustrations drawn from all the sciences and the literatures of the world. I had known of George Lewes since the far distant days when he was dramatic critic for the 'Leader,' under the literary name of Vivian; and when he used to be a merciless censor, alike of Charles Kean's Shakesperian acting and of Charles Kean's Shakesperian upholstery. The story of the 'Leader' is but dimly known, I fancy, to most of the younger generation — not many, perhaps, even of the elders have any distinct recollection of it. I remember it well, although it flourished long before I came to settle in London; for I was always, even as a boy, keenly watchful of any new and fresh enterprise which arose in English literature and journalism. The 'Leader' was started in the old days of the highly-priced, heavily-taxed, and rigidly-stamped newspapers, in order to advocate freedom of the Press and public opinion from official and judicial restraint, and also to familiarise the general reading public with a high order of cultured journalism. It was not the advocate of any particular school of opinions; but was the advocate of free expression and fair play to all manner of opinions; and it was brought into

activity by a number of young and earnest men whose principle it was that each should write of what he best understood, and that each should put his highest work into the columns of the paper. I think the greater part of the money required to start the paper and keep it going was found by Edward Pigott, then a young man of some fortune, which he readily devoted to the 'Leader' and its cause. George Henry Lewes was one of the principal writers, and Herbert Spencer gave to it some contributions of which the world in general did not, at that time, quite appreciate the value. Thornton Hunt, the son of Leigh Hunt, wrote a good deal for it; and its Parliamentary sketches, the very earliest, I think, of a kind of descriptive writing which has since found imitators in every London journal, was done by Edward M. Whitty, the most gifted member of a gifted family. In the columns of the 'Leader' Edward Whitty predicted the success of many a young Member of the House of Commons, whose claims to success, until Whitty noticed them, had passed unrecognised by the public in general, and by all but a few in the House itself. Robert Lowe was one of the men whose success Whitty confidently predicted, but I am not certain whether the prediction was given in the columns of the 'Leader,' or in those of the 'Liverpool Post.' Whitty wrote a novel called 'Friends of Bohemia,' which was singularly clever, odd, and piquant, abounding in vivid sketches of men and manners, and in odd original ideas, but entirely off 'the beat' of the circulating library's ordinary customer. I may, perhaps, mention that the description of the London hansom cab as the gondola of our streets, which is almost invariably ascribed to Disraeli, and is, indeed, to be found in one of Disraeli's novels, was put into print by

Edward Whitty before Disraeli had ever made use of it.

Undoubtedly the most brilliant among the regular staff of the 'Leader' was George Henry Lewes. Lewes went very near to the achievement of genuine literary fame. He might have been a great author, if, indeed, anybody ever might be anything but just what he is. His 'History of Philosophy' is a wonder of clearness in its way, even if it be nothing else. A great scientific man once said to me that it positively amused him to see how Lewes had contrived to bottle up into a series of essays the essential qualities of each of the philosophers whom he described, just as a chemist might bottle up his various specimens. The words were not spoken by any means in a purely contemptuous tone, as of one who saw nothing of merit in what Lewes had done; but were rather the words of a half-unwilling admirer who believed that Lewes had undertaken a task beyond his strength, and yet could not help admitting the surprising skill, the marvellous knack, by means of which he had made the achievement to seem almost possible. Lewes wrote biographies also: his 'Life of Goethe' was the first complete biography of the great poet ever attempted, and was admitted, even in Germany, to be a success. Then he wrote two or three novels, which were about as good as any novels can be when they are only the work of a very clever man, and not a man gifted with the special genius of the novelist. I was in the happy condition of one who could sincerely admire all that Lewes had done without distressing myself too much by thinking, as many persons did, that it was a pity he did not make fewer attempts, and so accomplish a better success. I do not suppose he could have produced anything really great, even if he had

disciplined his energies to the pursuit of fewer enterprises. I admired all his books, each according to its different way; but I delighted in him more even as a talker than as a writer. To hear him interchange ideas with George Eliot, or with his old friend Pigott, or with the groups on a Sunday afternoon, was a treat such as even the most fortunate among us is not likely to have often a chance of enjoying. The man is proverbially said to be unhappy who is born before his time. Certainly much the same might be said of the newspaper that is born before its time, provided always that, in the one case as in the other, happiness and complete success are assumed to have the same significance. The 'Leader' was too good for its public: at least, it could not command a circle of readers large enough to pay the expenses of a newspaper such as that, at a time when the legal and financial systems of the country did all they possibly could to prevent any newspaper from having a really large circulation.

When I first came to know Lewes personally, the days of the 'Leader' were long over. So, too, were those days of the 'Westminster Review' when Marian Evans (who had not then adopted the name of George Eliot) was acting as its assistant editor, and was living for a time in the home of Dr. and Mrs. Chapman. Lewes certainly was not an attractive man to look at. He had an insignificant presence, and a face that was downright plain — not even that *beau laid* about which we hear so much in certain French novels. But when the face lighted up with earnest thought, or the eyes flashed with wit and humour and fancy, then one forgot all about the appearance, and yielded to the magic of intellect and vivacity and imagination, of odd conceits, of illustrations quickly succeeding each other, of

unexpected citation, and of startling paradox. We seem to have made up our minds of late years that the art of writing letters has died out. Men are too busy, and the post goes out and comes in too often, and we travel too much, and we all know much the same places, and there are the daily papers, and there are the telegraph and the telephone; and the result of it all is that people do not now cultivate the art of writing long letters to their friends. If all that people say to each other be true, we may take it for granted that the present generation will bequeath no such letters to its friends as Thackeray has done, for instance, or as Henry Reeve has done, whom I used to meet so often in certain London houses not so many years ago. We seem to have made up our minds that we are not to have any more collections of letters to publish for the benefit of an admiring world; but I am inclined to ask a further question — to ask whether we are likely in the near future to have such good talkers as we had even in the recent past. Three of the best talkers I ever heard were Oliver Wendell Holmes, George Lewes, and Gladstone; and perhaps it would be comforting to one's personal self-sufficiency to believe that the juniors of the present day are not likely to hear three such talkers during an equal length of time. I should like to have heard Holmes and Lewes and Gladstone carry on a conversation together. One can only hope that the art of talking is not destined to die out with the art of letter writing; for society, it may be assumed, will always supply some time for talks, although society, and business, and politics combined, no longer seem to give much chance to the cultivation of the art of writing delightful letters all about nothing.

Most people have forgotten that it was George Lewes

who started the 'Fortnightly Review.' The idea of Lewes was to create an English periodical which should be the rival of the 'Revue des Deux Mondes.' He found a publisher; and the 'Fortnightly' went on very well for a time; its first number being enriched by a charming and thoughtful essay which bore the signature of George Eliot. But Lewes was not the man to make a success of such a publication; he had not the discipline of mind which ought to belong to a successful editor; and he moved too little in the active world to be able always to form a correct judgment as to what the general public wanted to read about. He wrote a series of essays in the 'Fortnightly' on the principles of success in literature, concerning which it used to be said at the time that Dickens asked a contemptuous and not very kind question. 'Success in literature,' Dickens said; 'what on earth does George Lewes know about success in literature?' I tell the story as it was told to me at the time, by Edmund Yates, who was one of Dickens's intimate friends. No doubt, George Lewes had little personal experience of anything which Dickens, with his boundlesss popularity and his conquering genius, would have called success in literature. Lewes had the gift of doing a great many different things very well; but he never accomplished anything which could have won for him a place in the front rank of letters; and yet he had done so many things deserving of high praise, that he might well be called one of the literary successes of his day. His whole way of life brought him into the habit of giving out his intellect in shreds, if one might use such an expression, and his whole accumulated force never went into any one thing. George Lewes had at one time a great faith in his own capacity for the stage, and he actually appeared under

an assumed name at a Manchester theatre, but he found himself a failure and gave up the enterprise. Certainly, the 'Fortnightly Review' did not become a success in his hands; and it soon passed into the editorship of my friend John Morley, who lifted it into the high position which it has maintained ever since. The 'Fortnightly' kept to its old name, even at the risk of seeming to commit something like an Irish bull, for it called itself 'fortnightly,' and made its appearance every month. Lewes did little or nothing to make any mark after he had given up the editorship of the 'Fortnightly Review,' and he began to be known in the world only as the husband of George Eliot; and he died before his wife. He was one of the men whom one meets and knows every now and then, and whose best work fills one with a sense of disappointment, because, from our personal knowledge of the man, we persuade ourselves that he has still something greater to do, and the something greater never comes.

George Eliot, on the other hand, gave us her very best almost at once. To paraphrase a saying of Thackeray's with regard to Dickens, she quietly stepped out of the crowd of pupils and walked straight up to the top of the class, and held her place there. It was, I think, in the very first number of the 'Cornhill Magazine' that Thackeray, in making allusion to certain great living writers, whom he described by letters in the alphabet, C. D. being, of course, among the number, spoke of E. as a star of the first magnitude just risen above the horizon. For a time nothing was talked of but George Eliot and her novels. It seemed hard to say that any praise given to her best works could be exaggeration, and yet there was something very like exaggeration indeed in certain of the praises that were

showered upon George Eliot. More than one elaborate essay, written by a critical hand, gave her a place in the literature of fiction distinctly higher than that of Dickens or that of Thackeray. The admiration of George Eliot became a sort of cult, a kind of worship. I knew one highly accomplished woman who declared that since she had come to know George Eliot's novels, she had absolutely made up her mind never to read the novels of any other author. I heard her announce this declaration in a little company made up mostly of literary men and women, very few of whom had the courage to object to this sudden extinction of the light upon all the altars, save the one alone. Of course, this was the extravagance of heroine worship; but the judgment which placed George Eliot above all other novelists of her time, at home or abroad, was very common indeed. A certain amount of reaction was inevitable, when public opinion had been strained so far; but it took a long time before the reaction really set in. The literary criticism of the day spoke generally in just as high terms of 'Daniel Deronda' as it had spoken of 'The Mill on the Floss.' On the other hand, I do not think full justice was ever done by criticism to the really great poetical merits of 'The Spanish Gypsy.' Many of the critics seemed to have made up their minds in advance that as the capacity of human nature must be limited in some way, it would be impossible that a woman who wrote such great novels could also write a good poem, and I feel sure that if 'The Spanish Gypsy' had been published anonymously it would have had a much more successful reception. The comparative failure of George Eliot's later novels seemed to me easy enough to understand. The author's original stock of observations and experiences had been well-nigh

exhausted, and there was no opportunity for filling the mind with an entirely new set of impressions. George Eliot and her husband lived for many years a life of what might be called almost absolute seclusion from the stirring movements of existence outside. One does not renew the youthfulness of one's imagination in the companionship merely of scientific men, and philosophers, and metaphysicians, and learned scholars, and the writers of thoughtful essays — in short, such a companionship as that to which George Eliot voluntarily gave up her later years. One could see not merely in 'Theophrastus Such,' but even in 'Daniel Deronda,' how the culture of the intellectual was beginning to overmaster the creative spirit. It matters little, however, to the fame of George Eliot that some of her later novels showed signs of decay. 'Adam Bede,' and 'Silas Marner,' and 'The Mill on the Floss,' and 'Romola' gave George Eliot her place in the very front rank of English novelists, and against the fame of these novels there has been no protest. She was more fortunate than some other novelists of genius — the world did not neglect her in her meridian to adore her in her eclipse.

CHAPTER XIX

NEW FRIENDS

Not long before my entrance into the House of Commons I had been fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of Dean Stanley, an acquaintanceship which continued up to the time of his death. Dean Stanley was pleased with something I had written, and in the frankest and friendliest manner invited me to come and see him at his house in Dean's Yard, Westminster. Nothing could have been more delightful to me than friendly association with such a man. I had always admired Dean Stanley's writings, and been impressed by the deep spirit of Christianity which suffused all that he spoke and all that he wrote. I felt it indeed an honour to be invited to the acquaintanceship of such a man. A more delightful host could not be found, nor a home in which one was more likely to meet refined and intellectual company. Dean Stanley gave a genial welcome to distinguished men and women from every country where literature and art and thought were prized; and I knew from my own observation that he was especially admired by men and women of culture in the United States. Many Americans, indeed, thought a visit to Europe was utterly incomplete and unsatisfactory unless it brought with it the gratification of their wish to see and speak with Dean Stanley.

Now and then people from many countries visited Dean Stanley who had, perhaps, no great claim on his time and his attention. I remember having this fact brought home to my mind somewhat oddly in the course of a conversation which I once had with two ladies who had come upon a visit to London. They were ladies endowed with a considerable fluency of speech, and they gave me an animated account of places and people seen by them in this capital; and among the events of their trip they spoke of a delightful visit which they had paid to Dean Stanley. I asked for further particulars, and they gave me between them a pretty long account of Dean Stanley's appearance, and of his home, and of what he and they had talked about. 'I take it,' said the elder lady, as the joint narrative was drawing to a close, 'that Dean Stanley is a very much overworked man; for I could not help noticing that during our visit a curiously bored expression seemed to rest upon his intellectual countenance.' In my own mind I had little difficulty in accounting for that curiously bored expression, even without referring it to the working of an intellect habitually overtasked, and I could not help thinking that there are heavy penalties to be paid for literary fame, especially when the fame is worn by one who has a reputation for exceeding kindliness of heart and untiring graciousness of manner. I feel satisfied that Dean Stanley must have gone through a good deal of boredom indeed, before he allowed any hint of such suffering to express itself on his sweet benignant face. Hardly any man in our time could have been more frequently visited by admiring strangers than it was the lot of Dean Stanley to be; and I suppose he had made up his mind to it, and found good in it, and was always sustained by the

thought of the pleasure it was in his power to give. Sydney Smith said he had lived in the country for many years and never met a bore; and Walter Scott said something of the same kind. I suppose these gifted men had the happy art of finding something interesting in every fellow-creature; and I can well believe that Dean Stanley was endowed by nature with the same blissful temperament. But for the saying of the lady mentioned I should not have supposed that Stanley ever allowed an expression of boredom to appear on his face; and even in her case it may fairly be presumed that he did not allow it to be seen that the boredom came from her and her companion, or she would hardly have made any allusion to the expression on his countenance.

Yet there was in Stanley's conversation a certain intellectual quickness — I should not like to say impatience — which gave animation and vivacity to his talk, and gave to those who talked with him a sort of gentle hint that the conversation was not expected to run along the smooth channel of the commonplace. Even a very good talker would, I imagine, have found himself put on his mettle when conversing with Dean Stanley. His nature seemed to be intensely sympathetic, and one had the comforting sensation in his presence that if there was anything in any talker which was really worth getting at, Stanley would be the man to get at it. I can remember some delightful dinner-parties at the house in Dean's Yard; and I was particularly delighted by a sort of general invitation which he was good enough to give me. 'I am a very busy man,' he said, 'and you are a very busy man, and we both of us have to see a great number of people; it would give me much pleasure if you would drop in

now and then, quite uninvited, to luncheon; I am almost always at home to luncheon at this time of year, and we could have a better chance of talking than at a formal dinner-party.' I had too much respect for Dean Stanley's time and occupations, I hope, to abuse the kindly privilege which he thus graciously gave me; but I did make use of it on rare occasions, and I felt proud of it always. Through Dean Stanley I came to make the acquaintance, in some cases the friendship, of many men and women, which I have found a source of pleasure to me through all my lifetime since. One evening in his drawing-room, before dinner, he suddenly stopped in some talk he was beginning with me, while the guests were assembling, and, taking the hand of a new arrival, he said, 'Come here, Matt, and let me bring you face to face with the man who says you are only a miniature Goethe.' The new arrival was Matthew Arnold, whom I had described in my 'History of Our Own Times' as a miniature Goethe. 'Oh, come now, I didn't say *only* a miniature Goethe,' I stammered out. 'If he could only convince me that I *am* a miniature Goethe,' said Arnold, with a kindly smile, 'how proud of myself he would make me.' My personal acquaintance with Matthew Arnold began on that fortunate day, and it continued until his too early death.

At Dean Stanley's house I first met Professor Jowett, whom I had always expected to find a sort of intellectual tyrant; but whom, on the contrary, I found very good-natured, agreeable, and gracious in manner. Through Dean Stanley, also, I made the acquaintance of a very remarkable woman, the late Lady Stanley of Alderley. Lady Stanley, when I first came to know her personally, was quite an old woman, but age had set its mark very

lightly on her. She had a fine face — she must have been an exceedingly handsome woman at one time — a commanding figure, and movements which had much of the energy of youth about them. During my acquaintance with her she made a long journey through Greece and Turkey, and those regions of Eastern Europe, Roumania, Servia, and Bulgaria, which were then only starting into independent existence; and at the time of this expedition she was, I think she said, in her seventy-first year. She told me an interesting anecdote once of her early acquaintanceship with Daniel O'Connell. She was one of the women of rank who had taken up O'Connell, much to the horror of some of her friends in society. O'Connell was quite conscious of the fact that people at that time regarded him with dislike and alarm; but he was made welcome at Lady Stanley's, and he appreciated her friendship. By degrees, however, society began to be deeply interested in him, and it was to the interest of the great Whig houses that he should be welcomed and courted as a guest. Lady Stanley once gave a dinner-party in his honour, and issued cards for a great reception the same evening — the cards of invitation bearing the words 'To meet Mr. O'Connell.' The great tribune came and dined and made himself very happy with Lady Stanley and her dinner-table guests. In the course of conversation, however, it came out that his hostess was to have a great party that same evening, and, almost immediately after dinner, O'Connell came into the drawing-room and began to take his leave. Apparently the Liberator had not observed the change that time was making in the sentiments of Whig society towards himself; and he thought, no doubt, that it would be a relief to his hostess if he took himself off

before the more general company began to arrive. So he rose to say good-night to his hostess. 'Mr. O'Connell,' the alarmed lady sternly asked, 'why are you going so soon?' 'Because,' O'Connell answered, with grave politeness, 'the friends who are now coming to see you will not care to meet me.' 'But, Mr. O'Connell,' the lady rejoined, 'they are all coming with the one purpose of meeting you.' So O'Connell remained, and the evening reception was a complete success.

Lady Stanley, when I knew her, was living in Dover Street, Piccadilly, and was the most hospitable of women. She gave luncheon-parties, dinner-parties, and great evening receptions; and she welcomed her friends on stated afternoons. I had known her son, Mr. Lyulph Stanley, some time before I became acquainted with her. I met Lyulph Stanley for the first time in New York, where he was then paying a visit, and it was somewhat curious that, although we had both been connected for years with several public movements in the same direction, I should have made his personal acquaintance for the first time in the United States. Another curious fact, of much the same nature, which I may mention incidentally, was that I had been for a considerable time a fellow-contributor with Mr. W. Fraser Rae to the 'Westminster Review,' and that I met Mr. Rae for the first time, not in London, but in San Francisco. To return, however, to the Stanley of Alderley family, I may say that I renewed my acquaintance with Lyulph Stanley after my return to London, and that we were associates in the House of Commons for many years. I have the most delightful recollections of the kindness shown to me by Lady Stanley of Alderley, and of the friendships made at her house, and through her. The course of politics, I am sorry to say,

somewhat disturbed our friendly relations; for Lady Stanley of Alderley was then a devoted follower of Mr. Gladstone, and when Mr. Gladstone's party came back into power, the Irish administration forced the Irish Nationalist Members into a policy of persistent and unyielding opposition; and I began to fear that my kindly hostess would not much care for the visits of an Irish Nationalist like myself. I am glad to say that there was no quarrel; but I did not present myself at Dover Street any more.

Among the many interesting acquaintances for which I am indebted to Lady Stanley of Alderley, is that of Madame Novikoff, a lady who filled a place in London society such as I think no other stranger has filled there during my recollections. My acquaintanceship with Madame Novikoff has been kept up from that time during my habitual residence in London; and, among many other reasons for remembering her with gratitude, is the fact that through her I came to know Alexander Kinglake, the author of 'Eöthen,' and the historian of the Crimean War. Kinglake was a close friend of Madame Novikoff; and used to visit her frequently at the hotel in one of the streets off Piccadilly where she was living at the time of which I speak. I hardly ever called on Madame Novikoff there without meeting Kinglake, and, I need hardly say, that he was a man whom anyone who loved literature must have been delighted to meet. I owe to Lady Stanley of Alderley one friendship, for it is indeed a friendship, which has lasted during many years, and is, I hope, destined to last many years longer — the friendship of Mrs. Stanley, as she then was, widow of Colonel John Constantine Stanley, and now Lady Jeune, wife of Sir Francis Jeune, President of the Probate and Divorce Court.

Mrs. Stanley was then living in a house on the river, a little above Putney; and she sent me an invitation to dine with her there one summer Sunday. Among her guests I found Sir Stafford and Lady Northcote — Sir Stafford, I need hardly say, became Lord Iddesleigh long after — and Lord Randolph Churchill, and Mr. Arthur Balfour. This was my first introduction to the two members of the famous Fourth Party — the Party consisting of four, the other two being Sir Henry Drummond Wolff and Sir John Gorst. Two recollections of that night come especially back to my memory. One was that Sir Stafford Northcote told me he had had only one serious difference of opinion with Mr. Disraeli, and that was for the reason that Disraeli obstinately refused to see any merit in the comedies of Ben Jonson, of which Sir Stafford was an ardent admirer. On that subject I could only cordially agree with Sir Stafford, and express my deep regret for the loss which Disraeli must have brought upon himself by refusing to enjoy the immortal humours of 'Bartholomew Fair.' The other recollection is that Lord Randolph Churchill, in his cheery boyish way, insisted that our hostess must sing 'The Wearing of the Green,' to gratify my Irish Nationalist sentiment, and that Mrs. Stanley, disregarding for the moment the Loyalist traditions of the family, complied with the request, and sang the rebel song with great sweetness and spirit. I shall have much to say about Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Randolph Churchill and Mr. Arthur Balfour at a later period of my reminiscences; and I only now stop to chronicle the fact that I met these three for the first time under the hospitable roof of the friend who is now Lady Jeune.

Let me return to Mr. Matthew Arnold. The acquaintance, brought about in such an odd and humorous way

by Dean Stanley, was one to which I can never look back without feelings of pride and pleasure that it should have existed, and of deep regret that it should have come to an end. I had always been one of Matthew Arnold's devoted literary admirers, before I had the good fortune of meeting him in person; and the charm of knowing him lent a new fascination to his writings — one seemed to find new meanings and new depths in the writings, the more he came to know the man. Matthew Arnold was not much of a politician; but his deep sympathy with the Celtic element in literature seemed to open his mind to a certain sympathy with Irish National aspirations — made him, at all events, much more tolerant than most Englishmen then were of the fervour with which the Irish National feeling expressed itself in political life. I went to see him one day at his residence in Hans Place, at the time when his brother-in-law, William Edward Forster, was about to accept the office of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. Mr. Forster and I had worked together in many a political agitation. His opinions had been generally in accordance with those which were advocated by the 'Morning Star'; and during the fierce controversy caused by the American Civil War he had been in frequent and close co-operation with us. I was full of hope that he was just the man who, in the position of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, would be of all others best suited to bring the people of England and the people of Ireland together. That, too, was the firm belief of Matthew Arnold, and I am not likely soon to forget the glad interchange of hopes and expectations which passed between us on that bright day. I am not now about to enter into any consideration of the causes which, in my opinion, led to the frustration of those

hopes; I am sure that, at the time, the hopes were entertained as sincerely by Matthew Arnold and by Forster as they could have been by me. I was in the way of meeting Matthew Arnold often after that time; and we always found a good deal to talk about which had not much to do with politics. It was at Matthew Arnold's recommendation that, some years later, I decided on accepting the offer of one particular literary agency for the delivery of a season's lectures in the United States and Canada. Arnold told me a good deal about his own lecturing tour in the States, which came to an end some seasons before I entered on mine; and I heard much about it afterwards in America. The American who accompanied me as secretary during my lecturing tour had accompanied Matthew Arnold in the same capacity, had conceived a positive affection and devotion for him, and was never weary of talking to me about him. Arnold's lectures in the States at first threatened to be a complete failure. He had a defective utterance, a voice wanting in modulation, and an accent which did not tend to make his words easily intelligible to an ordinary American audience. He used to read his discourses from manuscript; and if there is anything that an American audience finds it hard to endure it is a written discourse. The effect, therefore, of his first addresses was decidedly disappointing. Some of his friends in Boston had the courage needed for the occasion, and they told Mr. Arnold frankly the course which they thought he had better adopt. They assured him that so great was the public admiration for him in the American States, that in every city and town where he was announced to speak he would find a crowded hall to welcome him, if the crowd were to come together for the mere pleasure of seeing one whose writings had

given them so much delight. I am quite convinced that they did not say a word too much, because I had long known from my own experience that Matthew Arnold, as a writer, a teacher, and a poet, had a popularity in the United States more wide and general than that which he enjoyed among his own people. But, of course, the friends of Mr. Arnold in Boston knew very well that this was not what he could have wanted, and that his natural desire would be to make every sentence he spoke heard and understood by every audience he addressed. He was, therefore, strongly advised to take a few lessons in elocution, or, perhaps, I should rather say, in the physical art which enables a man to make the best use of his voice and his lungs, and to let each word carry its meaning to the ears and the minds of a great audience. A smaller man, a more conceited or less earnest man than Matthew Arnold might have resented this piece of advice, and turned in disdain from the public who found any difficulty in understanding what he had to say. Matthew Arnold, however, was no such man; he thanked his friends for their advice, declared that he had come to America to be heard and understood, and would neglect no means of carrying out his purpose; and he set himself to master, under suitable instruction, the art of making his voice carry all over a great hall. Being thoroughly in earnest about his task, he soon acquired the physical art that was needed; and American audiences were able to follow, with ease and with intellectual profit, every word he had to say.

I have always thought that this fact alone was one other proof, if any other proof were needed, of the genuine manhood that was in Matthew Arnold's character. There were some usages of the American lecture hall to

which Arnold resolutely, although not rudely, declined to accede. One of the customs with which lecturers in America usually have to comply is that which allows the lecturer, when he has completed his address, to be surrounded by a congratulating crowd of the leading members of the community, who are anxious to tell him how much they admire himself and his discourse. Matthew Arnold, I am assured, would have nothing of all this, but the moment he had finished his lecture disappeared from the platform and the building, and with the companionship of his secretary alone made his way to his temporary home. There was nothing ungracious in the mood which prompted this resolve; indeed, nobody who knew Matthew Arnold could easily conceive the idea of anything ungracious on his part: only he was not endowed with that 'terrible gift of familiarity' which an envious opponent ascribed to Mirabeau, and he knew that he never could be in his element in trying to exchange compliments with a crowd of perfectly unknown admirers. I am told that Arnold was greatly amused by one incident which happened during his American tour. Some of the railway companies were at that time in the habit of issuing tickets at a reduced rate for theatrical companies travelling through the States; and the privilege was occasionally extended to professional lecturers. Now and then the classifications got a little mixed, and Matthew Arnold was once amazed and amused to see that he and his secretary were travelling on tickets issued to the Matthew Arnold Comic Opera Company.

Travelling in the States, three years after Matthew Arnold had returned to Europe, I can say that he had not shown himself in any sense an ungenial or unsociable visitor; and that I came across many a house-

hold which he had gladdened by his ready and kindly acceptance of a hospitable invitation, and by his pleasant and companionable ways as a guest. I had many agreeable talks with him about our different experiences during the lecturing tours which came thus near to each other, and I need hardly say that Arnold was not one of the Englishmen who regard America as an odd sort of new country to be put up with and patronised or good-humouredly satirised by the superior order of visitor from the old land. Of late years it has become quite usual for English literary men and scientific men to visit the United States as lecturers; and many of our popular divines have preached from American pulpits. But I know that in America there was an impression that Matthew Arnold was a man of retiring disposition, whose natural inclination would be to avoid all public display, and to shrink from committing his spoken utterances to the criticism of a popular audience. Therefore, up to the time of his actual appearance in the lecturing arena there was much doubt felt in the States as to whether Arnold could really be induced to cross the Atlantic for the purpose of giving lectures; and there was a feeling of something like positive gratitude when it became certain that he would come and that he would speak. I think I have already observed that there are some English writers who were thoroughly appreciated in the United States before they were thoroughly appreciated in their own country. Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning were undoubtedly two of these; another is Herbert Spencer; and yet another was Matthew Arnold.

CHAPTER XX

GEORGE MEREDITH

MANY years have passed since I first had the good fortune to make the personal acquaintance of George Meredith. Many years more have passed since I first came to know him as a writer of fiction. I think I was among the earliest of those into whose minds it was borne as a fact that with George Meredith an entirely new and original force had arisen in English literature. If I am not greatly mistaken, I think I am entitled to boast of the fact that I contributed the first long and elaborate study of the genius of George Meredith to the pages of a regular quarterly review. Of course, I do not mean to say that other writers had not contributed articles on George Meredith full of appreciation and rapture, to the pages of weekly and of daily journals and, probably, too, of monthly magazines; but I hope I am entitled to claim the distinction of having been the writer of the first essay concerning him which appeared in one of the quarterlies. The essay which I wrote was for the 'Westminster Review,' then edited by my friend the late Dr. John Chapman. Chapman knew George Meredith intimately, had an immense admiration of him, and a thorough appreciation of his genius, and yet it was not without some hesitation that he accepted my suggestion to write an article altogether, or almost altogether, about a man at that time so little known to

the general public. The truth is, that just then George Meredith was not known to the general public at all. He had a small circle of enthusiastic admirers scattered here and there among English readers — wherever you happened to go you were sure to meet some one of these, and when you did meet one of them, you met a man or woman to whom the reality of George Meredith's genius was an obvious and a positive fact. But I feel well assured that if a meeting of George Meredith's enthusiastic admirers could then have been summoned, in some mysterious way, from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, it might have assembled in some London hall of very moderate dimensions. Readers of the present day can have very little idea of the manner in which Meredith's earlier novels, some of the best he ever wrote, were overlooked by what Thackeray once called 'the great, big, stupid public.' The publisher who had printed some of these novels told me that the first attempt at fiction by Miss Smith or Miss Brown would have a better chance of circulation than a new novel by George Meredith. As he explained the matter to me, a large proportion of the subscribers to the circulating libraries ask usually only for the newest novel, and if two novels had come out at the same time, and one were by George Meredith and the other by Miss Brown, many would have preferred to take their chance with Miss Brown, having a vague idea that George Meredith was somebody rather difficult to understand. He also went on to assure me that it was only a certain inner circle of the subscribers to the libraries who had got even this vague idea about George Meredith and his books; for, to the great majority of them, the man and his books were absolutely unknown. Yet I am bound to say that we of the very, very select group, most of

us quite unknown to each other, who had read 'Richard Feverel' and gone into delight over it, were perfectly certain that the novelist we fancied we alone had discovered, or at all events had been the first to discover, would come one day to the front and receive the world's full recognition. We had still a long time to wait; but the group of admirers grew larger and larger, and the admiration became more and more intense.

The whole literary world had come to recognise George Meredith before I had the good fortune to become personally known to him. My introduction to Meredith was due to my friend Kegan Paul, whom I have already mentioned in these Reminiscences. At that time, as now, Meredith was living in a charming home near Box Hill, in the midst of the most exquisite woodland scenery. I went to visit him at his house, and that visit led to others, and to an acquaintanceship which has been kept up, as well as the habits of two hard-working men living somewhat apart would allow, amid the ordinary movements of existence. I think the first impression which George Meredith made on me was that of extraordinary and exuberant vitality. When I saw him for the first time, he had left his younger days a long way behind him, and yet he had the appearance and the movements of one endowed with a youth that could not fade; energy was in every movement; vital power spoke in every gesture. He loved bodily exercises of all kinds; he delighted to take long brisk walks — 'spins,' as he called them — along the highways and the byways of the neighbourhood; and he loved to wander through the woods, and to lie in the grass, and I have no doubt he would have enjoyed climbing the trees. He seemed to have in him much of the

temperament of the faun: he seemed to have sprung from the very bosom of nature herself. His talk was wonderful, and, perhaps, not the least wonderful thing about it was that it seemed so very like his writing. Now it was Richard Feverel who talked to you, and now Harley Adrian, and then Beauchamp — not that he ever repeated any of the recorded sayings of these men, but that he talked as one could imagine any of them capable of talking on any suggested subject. Was his meaning a little difficult to follow sometimes? Did the idea now and then appear to soar through clouds of his own creation? Perhaps it was so sometimes; but then the meaning was always so subtly and surprisingly helped out by look, by gesture, by a sudden glance or flash of the deep eyes, that one felt quite sure he would not be allowed to remain without the clearest comprehension of what every sentence would have him to understand. Any subject would do to give Meredith a start, if he were in the humour and took to it; then he would play with it, turn it round and round, spin it up into the air, catch it before it fell to earth, and suddenly send it home to its mark. He was a man of strong likings and dislikings, in letters and in art; his very prejudices had a charm in them because they gave him such admirable opportunities for scattering new and bewildering fancies around his subject. Like Matthew Arnold, he had a strong sympathy with the Celtic spirit in poetry and in literature generally; but nobody could be less like Matthew Arnold in his manner and in his expression. He could rattle off humorous verse, especially of the comic or satirical order, at will; and I daresay he felt a certain gratification now and then in utterly bewildering his hearers.

I have often wondered to myself how George Meredith managed to get on when some commonplace heavy-witted stranger happened to be introduced to him. He certainly did not lay himself out for the visits of such strangers, and his friends took good care not to thrust visitors upon him. But still he must now and then have had his usual ways of life disturbed by the presence of some commonplace and heavy-witted admirer from a distance. Did he make up his mind to bring himself down to the level of such a new-comer? Could he have brought himself down to that level, even if he had tried? Or did he avenge himself for the intrusion by letting loose all the power of his vivacity and his fancy to bewilder the visitor and upset his slow-working brain into mere puzzlement? Certainly, if he ever was tempted beyond resistance into any intellectual freakishness of this kind, he must have yielded in defiance of the instincts of his kindly nature; for a more genial host never entertained the passing stranger. George Meredith loved to make his guests happy in his house; and was never tired at his table of suggesting to them new qualities in food and drink to give their palates a fresh chance of satisfaction. He had an exquisite fancy for dainty dishes of all kinds, and could create a new and refined taste in the system of even a city alderman by the manner in which he dilated on the peculiar delicacy of this or that article of food. To dine with George Meredith was to find dinner converted into a feast of intellect and fancy, and no longer left to be either a mere satisfaction of physical craving or the indulgence of an epicure's appetite. He had a charming little chalet in his grounds, which he used as a study when he wanted to be quite alone with his work, and where he sat and

talked with a friend now and then when his work was put away for the moment and he and his companions could smoke and talk, and watch the clouds in the sky, and the shadows on the grass, and only a very prosaic person could fail to find something of the poetic in himself under such an influence.

Meredith, as I have said, loved all manner of bodily exercises; and, indeed, it amazed me when I first used to visit him, to see a man, no longer young, indulge in such feats of strength and agility. It delighted him to play with great iron weights, and to throw heavy clubs into the air and catch them as they fell, and twirl them round his head as if they had been light bamboo canes. I remember wondering, indeed, sometimes, whether such exercises and such feats of strength were not taxing too far the physical powers of a man who had already passed his prime; and whether over-taxed nature would not some day show that she had been taxed too far. But, at the same time, the general impression which George Meredith then gave one was that of the faun-like creature, the child of Nature who must always be young, as Nature herself is always young. I do not think I ever met a man in whom the physical and the mental forces were such absolute rivals and equals as they seemed to be in George Meredith at the time when I first had the happiness of knowing him. Since those distant days I have met him but at rare intervals. I saw him sometimes during the sitting of the Parnell Commission in one of the Strand Law Courts. Meredith took a deep interest in those extraordinary proceedings; and it seems almost unnecessary to say that his keen intellect was not taken in for a single moment by the grotesque forgeries of the unhappy Pigott. As a rule Meredith had no part in politics, and showed no

desire even to enter into talk on political subjects; but he took a deep interest in the progress of that extraordinary inquiry, and attended the sittings of the court day after day. He usually sat in one of the seats just behind the leading members of the Bar; and his handsome intellectual face caused many an inquiry among those who habitually attended the sittings of the court, and who never thought of seeing the secluded novelist, the man known to them only by the fame of his books, among the occupants of the foremost benches in that court of strange political investigation. More than one of the leading advocates in that historic trial was moved for a moment into forgetfulness of the task in which he was engaged by the news that George Meredith was sitting just behind him.

Since that time I have seen Meredith occasionally when he has emerged from his habitual seclusion to enjoy some striking performance in a London theatre; and I have gone into his box, and exchanged some words with him, and got some ideas from him. I hear of him from friends every now and then, and have of late heard with deep regret that his physical health has failed him, and that he can no longer revel in the woodlands as he did in former days. George Meredith is not yet an old man, as years are counted in our long-living times; we have statesmen among us as old as he who are not yet supposed to have come into their full acquisition of political power. Only a few months ago we all sent him our congratulations upon his seventieth birthday; and the world may well hope that he has many years of intellectual activity still before him. But, in any case, his fame has come to him, and those of us who recognised him at the very opening of his career may feel a certain self-complacent pride in the

thought that the world has now at last come up with us, and that what we said, nearly forty years ago, everybody is saying to-day. I think that for my own part I admire 'Beauchamp's Career' more thoroughly from first to last than any other of Meredith's novels, although I do not want my readers to suppose for a moment that I have grown in any sense cold to the merits of 'Richard Feverel' and 'Evan Harrington' — I have a friend, himself distinguished in letters and in politics, who insists that 'Evan Harrington' contains the finest picture of a certain kind of woman yet given in fiction, and I only feel inclined to qualify his opinion by expressing a reluctance to go in too absolutely for the use of superlatives. But I find much in 'Beauchamp's Career' which seems to lift me higher in thought and in soul and in hope, than any other of Meredith's novels has done; and I do not know where, in fiction, one can find love scenes more beautiful than those which are pictured in what I may call the Venetian pages of the story. For the full enjoyment of these pages they should be read in Venice, as George Sand's story 'La Dernière Aldini' ought to be, and as Nathaniel Hawthorne's 'Transformation' ought to be read in Rome. But I am not about to resume the work of a professional critic, which I gave up as a regular occupation years and years ago.

One of George Meredith's novels, 'Diana of the Crossways,' became, some four or five years ago, the subject of a political and personal controversy, in which I was myself to some extent, although indirectly, concerned, and has been brought into notice again quite lately by the publication of the late Henry Reeve's 'Memoirs.' The readers of 'Diana of the Crossways' will remember that the heroine of the book becomes

possessed of an important Cabinet secret imparted to her in confidence by an admirer, who is a member of the English Cabinet, to whom the secret belongs; and she sells it to the 'Times' newspaper for a large sum of money. Popular rumour, or conjecture, or scandal, at once assumed that in the story of his heroine George Meredith had told the true story of a lady once famous for her beauty and for her literary gifts — Mrs. Norton — grand-daughter of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and aunt of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava. George Meredith heard the story as many others had heard it, and the common belief was afterwards confirmed by a passage in the first edition of the late Sir William Gregory's autobiography. My concern with the story was that I had made some allusion to it, as I heard it, in the first volume of my 'History of Our Own Times.' I told the story just as I had heard it during the early years of my settlement in London as a journalist. I did not state it as a fact, and did not attach any importance to it; indeed, I went so far as to say that there were other ways of explaining the betrayal of a Cabinet secret more likely and more obvious than the conjecture that an enamoured young statesman had let it out to some woman whom he admired. I did not give the name of the lady; and only made allusion to the story at all because it had been too much talked of to be omitted altogether from a chapter of historical narrative.

When I first heard the story there was no suggestion that the lady had sold the secret, but only that it had come to her knowledge through a member of the Cabinet, and that she had somehow let it out to the editor of the 'Times.' No subsequent facts had come out to strengthen the original tale, and the addition of

the purchase and the sale was but an illustration of the growth of the myth. The story, I need hardly tell most of my readers, arose from the premature publication by the 'Times' newspaper of the fact that Sir Robert Peel's Government had determined to propose the repeal of the duties on corn. I was not living in London at that time, nor for many years afterwards; but when I became a journalist in London I found the story still afloat and believed in by many who were active politicians at the time when Peel brought in his famous measure. The publication of Meredith's novel and afterwards of Sir William Gregory's autobiography revived the almost forgotten scandal, and gave the surviving relatives of Mrs. Norton an opportunity of proving that it was absolutely without the slightest foundation. We now know that the resolve of the Cabinet was communicated to the 'Times' directly, by a leading member of Peel's Administration, whose sole desire was that the determination of Peel and his colleagues should be known before the sailing of the next American steamer, as the news might have a favourable effect on the American Republic — an effect which it was then thought very desirable to bring about. George Meredith at once appended to a new edition of his novel a statement to the effect that the incident in his heroine's career was pure fiction, and had nothing to do with fact; and most of us who were in any way concerned in spreading the original story took every means in our power of making it known that it had been completely disproved. I should not have referred to the subject now but for the fact that it all comes up again in the first volume of Mr. Reeve's 'Letters and Journals.' The memory of Mrs. Norton is anew completely vindicated in that volume; but the editor men-

tions the fact that, notwithstanding all that had been done to banish the scandal, it had been repeated again and again by careless writers in recent days. Let us hope that now, at last, it is done with for ever.

I remember well having seen Mrs. Norton — afterwards, by her second marriage, Lady Stirling-Maxwell — in later days. It was at a great reception given in London by the members of the Social Science Association which had held its sittings in our Metropolis during the autumn of 1862. I do not know from whose inspiration came the superb idea of turning Westminster Palace into the scene of the reception; but the inspiration was acted on, and a magnificent ceremonial was created. The whole of Westminster Palace was thrown open to the guests, who were received on the steps at the further end of Westminster Hall by Lord Brougham and other leading patrons of the Association. The House of Commons and the House of Lords were open to all visitors, and were thronged with such a crowd as the most exciting debate and division never could have brought together in these solemn chambers. It was there that I saw for the first and last time the lady whose novels had delighted an earlier generation, whose latest novel I had myself the pleasure of reviewing. She still retained her dignified stateliness of style, her picturesque grace of movement, the brightness of her eyes, and many traces of that beauty which had belonged to her as it belonged to other women of her family. George Meredith is far too generous and high-minded a man not to regret that he should, however unintentionally and naturally, have given currency to a story which reflected in any way on the personal character of such a woman. But at the same time he might have consoled himself with a certain pride in his craft

when he came to remember that the untruthful story which had been floating about the world uncontradicted for more than a generation only challenged enough of attention to lead to its complete confutation when it appeared in the pages of 'Diana of the Crossways.'

CHAPTER XXI

A SUDDEN GLANCE BACKWARD

My recollection going back to that festival in Westminster Palace, and to the appearance of the House of Lords thronged with ladies curious to see everything, and wandering up and down the floor, as if it were that of an ordinary ball-room in the interval between one dance and another, brings back to my mind an indignant protest made by Lord Brougham in that same chamber on a quite different occasion. As everybody knows, the wives of Peers, and the other ladies who are entitled to sit as spectators in the House of Lords, sit in the open galleries, and not behind a grating as the ladies do in the House of Commons. One evening, when an important debate was going on in the Peers Chamber, the late Baron Bunsen happened to find his way into one of the galleries among a number of Peeresses. This sight had, for some reason or other, an infuriating effect on the temper of Lord Brougham, and he loudly demanded that the foreign diplomatist should leave that gallery and go back to the proper place assigned to him and to his brother representatives of foreign Courts. Lord Brougham was ungracious enough to make the further remark that the presence of so many ladies in the House of Lords made the place look very like a casino: a casino being then in London a sort of music-hall. Lord Brougham, however, seemed

to behold with unmingled satisfaction the floor of the House of Lords, and not merely the galleries, occupied by a crowd chiefly made up of fashionable ladies. Of course the fact that the Lord Chancellor was not on the Woolsack constituted all the difference, and kept away any disturbing thought about the desecration of the House of Lords.

Another recollection, however, comes up to my mind in connection with that night of harmless revelry in the Chamber of Peers. Only a short time, comparatively speaking, before the reception of the Social Science Association, I had sat in the Press Gallery of the House of Lords, and listened to the last great speech delivered there by one of the foremost orators of his time — Lord Lyndhurst. That was on the occasion of the famous debate on that part of Mr. Gladstone's financial scheme which proposed to abolish the duty on paper. The duty on paper was the last barrier which the laws of the State imposed between the people of these islands and cheap literature. Everyone knew that Lord Lyndhurst had made up his mind to oppose the repeal of the paper duty; and everyone knew likewise that the House of Lords could not, in the ordinary course of human nature, have many other opportunities of listening to the eloquence of Lord Lyndhurst. Lyndhurst had long been the rival, as he was in many qualities the very opposite of Brougham. Where Brougham was rough and passionate, Lyndhurst was stately, dignified, and calm; where Brougham foamed and thundered, Lyndhurst pleaded, argued, satirised, illustrated; where Brougham appealed to the passions, Lyndhurst tried to get the better of the judgment and the reason. One's preference for either orator would probably be determined by his preference for the one school of

advocacy or for the other. On this very day, the day of the great debate on the paper duties, Lord Lyndhurst was to complete his eighty-ninth year. Everybody knew how the debate must end; for there could be no reasonable doubt that the House of Lords would throw out the Bill by a large majority, and that Mr. Gladstone's splendid reform would be put off to another year. The interest of the night for the listeners was not, therefore, in the result of the division — that was a foregone conclusion — but in the speech of Lord Lyndhurst. Some special preparation was made for the purpose of enabling Lyndhurst to get through his task without difficulty. Seldom, indeed, has an orator of eighty-nine attempted to deliver a speech of great length, involving a vast array of complicated arguments, to any legislative assembly.

A sort of reading-desk was erected in front of the bench where Lyndhurst was sitting — an arrangement never, so far as I know, introduced before or since into the debating chamber of the House of Lords. The object of this unusual structure was, of course, to enable the aged lawyer to lean upon the reading-desk if the fatigue of his long task should prove too much for him. I watched Lyndhurst very closely all throughout his speech, and I never saw him avail himself for a single moment of the means of rest thus set up for his advantage. He began his speech in an easy, clear, and musical tone, audible to every listener in every part of the House. From the first to the last of the long speech the voice of the orator never gave way, nor did he ever seem to have the slightest difficulty in making himself fully heard. The sentences of the speech came out as easily as the orator's breathing might have done. When Lyndhurst began his task

we were most of us expecting to have to make some allowance for the physical difficulties of the aged orator. The most indifferent listener must have felt a certain painful sense of anxiety when he thought of the man of eighty-nine thus setting out to deliver a great speech on so great a subject. Nothing can be more distracting and disenchanting to an audience than to find a constant difficulty in following the words of a speaker — no beauty of language, no grace of style, no ingenuity of argument can enable the listeners to get over the strain caused by the mere physical difficulty of hearing all that the orator is saying. Yet, I am sure that every one of his listeners was determined that night to do all he could in order to appreciate fully the eloquence of the old man who was about to speak. Even those who, like myself, were heart and soul in favour of the reform against which he was about to argue, felt the sincerest hope that Lyndhurst might be able to make himself heard without stress or pain, and that no word of his argument should be lost on the audience. Everyone can understand what a relief it was to our feelings when the sound of Lyndhurst's voice made it clear to us that age had not weakened the penetrating charm of his tones. After a while we forgot all about his eighty-nine years; and we listened to his speech with the same unperturbed interest which we might have felt in listening to the oration of a man of forty.

I do not remember that the voice of the orator failed during a single sentence, or that there was the slightest suggestion of physical decrepitude about the orator's manner. The speech itself was a remarkably clever piece of argument, when we bear in mind that Lyndhurst was advocating a case which time and the movement of education and of civilisation had rendered

utterly hopeless. A reader of the present day might find it hard to understand how any man in his senses could have endeavoured to maintain the position which Lord Lyndhurst took up in that memorable debate; but even a reader of to-day would have to admit, if he went carefully through the speech, that the advocacy was surprisingly dexterous and skilful. Lyndhurst seems to have made a study of the whole agitation on the subject. He quoted passage after passage from speeches delivered at public meetings in favour of the repeal of the duty on paper, and from the arguments addressed by deputations of the same way of thinking to Lord Derby and other members of the existing Tory Administration. Many men, otherwise quite unknown to fame, who had taken part in such demonstrations, were amused, amazed, and delighted to find their speeches taken up by Lord Lyndhurst and keenly discussed and dissected by him for the instruction of the House of Lords. One might have expected a marvellously ingenious piece of special pleading from Lord Lyndhurst, even on his eighty-ninth birthday; but few of us, indeed, could have expected that it would be anything but a piece of special pleading constructed out of the good old Tory arguments which had been summoned to do service against every successive scheme of reform. What few, indeed, of us did expect or could have expected was that the ingenious argument should all, or nearly all, be founded on the newest facts and the latest evidences of the case, should concern itself with the arguments of yesterday, and with speeches reported in the newspapers of that very morning. Lyndhurst brought every conceivable subject, one might almost say, in foreign affairs as well as in home affairs to the aid of his argument. The disturbed state

of Europe, the ambition of Louis Napoleon, the spread of democracy and socialism through continental populations; all these possible sources of danger supplied him with new reasons for England's standing by her established order of things; and, of course, it would be needless to say, among the things established by that order, the Conservative orator treated, as of special importance, the duty on the manufacture of paper. All this sounds absurd enough, if calmly considered by a practical reader after a long distance of years, and, indeed, it sounded absurd enough to many of us at the time; but the extraordinary plausibility of the speaker invested it with a certain air of impressiveness, an air of something beyond mere plausibility and the ingenious pleading of a skilful advocate. I remember that I could not help wondering at the time what Lyndhurst himself must have thought about much of it; and what frank admissions he might have made to some of his closer friends at the dinner-party which he gave in honour of his birthday that same evening. But I was not lucky enough to have any opportunity of gaining or even seeking his confidence on that point; for I never even spoke to Lyndhurst, and I never heard him speak after that momentous debate which has just now come back in so peculiar a fashion to my memory.

CHAPTER XXII

'LORD JOHN' AND LADY RUSSELL

MANY years before I thought of obtaining a seat in the House of Commons, I had the honour of being presented to Lord John Russell, who afterwards became Earl Russell, but who will be best remembered in history by the name and title which he bore during the days of the first great Reform Bill. I had some opportunities of meeting him since that first time; and I remember many of his speeches in the House of Commons. It was a wonderful thing to me to meet and talk with a man who had conversed with the Emperor Napoleon at Elba; and who could tell how the Emperor had gravely asked him whether there was any chance of Wellington seizing upon the Crown of England. But I think I was even more impressed by Lord John Russell's casual mention of the fact that he had met, in Florence, the widow of Charles Edward Stuart — the widow of 'Bonnie Prince Charlie.' Nothing in the nature of a living experience has ever carried me so far back in time as those words from Lord John Russell. There I stood talking with a man whose presence was a living link between the moment of our meeting and the days of Waverley and of Charles Edward.

The present generation, so far as I can judge, scarcely does full justice to the ability of Lord John Russell as a Parliamentary debater. Of course, he was wanting in

some of the physical qualities which go far to make a great orator; and, indeed, he was not in the highest sense an orator at all. He was small of stature, his voice was not strong, his eloquence did not come with a rush, there was little of enthusiasm about him. But I must say that I have heard very few Parliamentary debaters who could surpass him in the skilful use of all the weapons of debate. Although his voice wanted volume, yet he could make himself heard all over the House of Commons; and although his manner was generally cold and sometimes awkward, he could warm to his subject in a way which made the listener believe that he carried a stock of reserved force about him which would be found equal to even the most exacting effort. The impression given by some others among the leading debaters in the House of Commons during Russell's time was that each of the men had done all he could in each particular speech; that the speech had exhausted itself and was all the orator had to say; while in Lord John Russell's case, the listener always seemed to believe that Russell could have done much more if he thought the occasion required a greater effort. Those who have been compelled to pay much attention to Parliamentary speaking will easily understand how thoroughly the listener can enjoy the charm of a speech delivered by one whose eloquence conveys the idea that he brought his argument to a close because he thought he had said enough for his immediate purpose; but not because he had not a great deal more to say if the occasion had called for further argument.

Lord John Russell, too, was a perfect master of a certain kind of quiet and biting sarcasm which leaves its victim little chance of any effective reply or reprisal. Everyone remembers his famous retort on Sir Francis

Burdett, when the former Radical agitator expressed his contempt for the cant of patriotism, and was countered by Russell's remark that to his mind there was something still more contemptible, the recant of patriotism. I remember an effective retort made by Lord John Russell which amused the House of Commons very much at the time, but has not been often quoted since, and is not, I think, to be found in the pages of Hansard. It occurred during the debate on Lord John Russell's Reform Bill of 1860. During that debate a certain number of members who were supposed to be Liberals declared against the Reform Bill and deserted the Government. One of these was the representative of a Scottish constituency; and he made what was supposed by himself and his friends to be a very powerful speech against the Bill. Everybody who knows anything about the House of Commons knows that nothing is so taking with that Assembly as a speech delivered by a member against some measure introduced by the leaders of his own party. The Scottish member to whom I am now referring had therefore the satisfaction of hearing his arguments and his declamation greeted with immense applause from the opposite side of the House as well as from those who, sitting on his own side, were agreed with him in disapproving of the Government measure. One of the dangers which, according to his views, were specially threatened by the Reform Bill, was the danger of having intelligent, educated, and responsible constituencies swamped by the votes of a number of ignorant and thoughtless working-men. 'What,' he asked, 'was to happen to the Commonwealth if a constituency like that of Edinburgh, for instance, were to be invaded by a mass of newly-created voters taken from the ranks of the untaught and the irresponsible?' When Lord

John Russell's time came to reply on the whole question he made a brief passing reference to the speech of this Scottish orator. He explained that according to his observation and his conviction there was no likelihood whatever of the new voters whom he proposed to bring into the Parliamentary system being the reckless disturbers of social order with whose advent his honourable friend had attempted to terrify the House. Then he went on to say, with a bland quietness, as if he had really only a passing and harmless observation to offer before quite dismissing that part of the subject, that he had a great respect, indeed, for the electors of Edinburgh, but he could not help feeling a certain doubt as to whether they had always exercised their habitual intelligence — 'on the occasion, for instance, when they rejected Lord Macaulay and elected my honourable friend.' The House rang with laughter: even the Tories enjoyed the hit; and even those who held the same views as 'my honourable friend,' on the subject of the Reform Bill, could not repress all evidence of the amusement they found in this delightful touch of sarcasm. I think Lord John Russell's speech on Lord Palmerston's Conspiracy Bill was one of the finest pieces of reasoning and one of the best displays of Parliamentary eloquence I ever heard in the House of Commons.

Lord John Russell had deep-seated friendships and the strongest domestic affection; but his was not a temperament that easily seeks for or makes friendships; and he did not care to acquire, even if he could have acquired, the art which wins popularity and gains ready praise. 'You do not advertise — do you, Bobs?' says Mr. Rudyard Kipling, in one of his poems, the hero of which is commonly understood to be a certain great soldier of the present day. 'You do not advertise — do

you, John?' might, with equal force and truth, have been said of Lord John Russell. In no sense did Lord John Russell advertise. He did not take the slightest pains to recommend himself to the great local men of important constituencies. To a man like Lord Palmerston, for instance, it came quite natural to be hand and glove with everybody, to slap everybody on the back, to interchange pleasant sayings and jokes and compliments with all comers, and to send away each visitor more delighted than the last with the great statesman's bewitching manners, and more determined than ever to support the Administration of which so delightful a companion was the recognised head. Now, I have not the least intention of suggesting that these winning ways were adopted purposely by Lord Palmerston with the object of making himself popular and gaining support for his Government. Lord Palmerston had a very kindly heart as well as a joyous disposition; and it came quite naturally to him to say pleasant things and to be demonstrative in his sympathy. On the other hand, it was no lack of kindliness of heart which made Lord John Russell cold, shy, and even repelling in manner, so far as the outer world was concerned. Nobody could have had a more generous disposition; nobody was more absolutely unselfish. But Lord John Russell's nature made him reserved, retiring, and awkward. He had no idea of making any conciliatory movement, merely because such a movement might conciliate some one whose support would be of advantage to a Liberal Administration. He relied upon the merits of his public measures and the strength of his public arguments to secure followers and adherents; and it never occurred to him that any good could be done by his going out of his way to talk over some local magnate who might

have to be flattered into co-operation. I have often heard stories about the difficulty which his friends had on critical occasions in prevailing upon Lord John Russell to make marked advances to somebody whom he had never met before, and with whom he did not particularly care to enter into conversation. Thackeray tells us of his Arthur Pendennis, that many people set him down as proud, when, in fact, he was only shy. This was certainly the case with Lord John Russell. Many men and women took it into their heads, and waxed angry at the thought, that it was the aristocratic blood of the Bedfords which made Lord John too proud to talk to untitled folks; whereas Lord John, at the time, was not thinking in the least about his family dignity, and was only awkward in talking to people with whom he had had no previous acquaintance. For one reason or another, Lord John Russell passed through the world without having the genuine nobility, simplicity, and truthfulness of his nature thoroughly recognised by the majority of those with whom he was brought into contact. The fact did not particularly hurt him: he was not greedy of applause; and if he had thought over the matter at all, and had been self-absorbed enough to make a study of his own character and the conditions of his life, he might have satisfied himself with the evidences daily borne in upon him that those who knew him the best loved him the most.

It was not until after the death of Lord John Russell that I came to have any close acquaintance with some of the members of his family. I account it one of the happiest events of my life that I was admitted to the friendship of his wife, the late Dowager Countess Russell. That friendship lasted until Lady Russell's death in the opening of 1898. During all the interven-

ing years I had known Lady Russell and her daughter Lady Agatha intimately, and was always made welcome at their home. Lady Russell was one of the most intellectual, most charming, and most true-hearted women it has ever been my good fortune to know. She was a woman who never could grow old; even when I first knew her she was advanced in years, but her mind and her heart retained a perpetual youthfulness, and at the same time a perpetual maturity. Although of late years she had almost altogether given up visiting London, she had always the keenest, brightest interest in everything that was going on in that active world from which she had withdrawn. She was a philanthropist in the highest sense of the word; there was nothing which concerned human happiness with which she did not feel a living sympathy. She lived for the most part at Pembroke Lodge, Richmond Park, the use of which had been granted her husband by the Crown; and she also spent a good deal of time at the house at Haslemere, which belonged to her son. At both these places it was a delight to me to be allowed to visit her often, and to have long conversations with her about political movements; about social progress; about art and letters and science; about charitable organisations — about everything which concerned itself in any way with the benefit of humanity; about the poor and about the rich.

Lady Russell, during her long married career, had known most of the men and women whose names became famous over Europe and the United States. Her husband had always a great love for literature; had been the early friend of Thomas Moore; had welcomed Dickens and Thackeray and Tennyson and Browning in his house; and Lady Russell shared her husband's

love for literature and art as she did his love for politics. Her memory always retained the keenest impression of anyone whom she had met, and who was worth meeting; and nothing could be more delightful than to talk with her about the people whom she had known. Nor was her interest less keen in hearing of those she had not known herself. To tell her of any man or woman who had done a brave or a noble thing was to arouse her quickest interest in the one about whom you spoke, even though she had never heard the name before. Tell her of somebody who had written a good book, or made a good speech, or done a good deed of any kind, and her eyes would sparkle with sympathy, with admiration, and with eagerness to know more about the subject of your story. There was aristocratic family on her own side as well as her husband's; but the only aristocracy Lady Russell ever seemed to think about was the aristocracy of merit. While in the country she occupied herself closely and continuously in every local effort for the spread of education and the improvement of the condition of the poor. She was an enthusiastic advocate of the cause of freedom all over the world; while her tenderness of heart made her shrink from any of the excesses of political or social revolution, and might have led her to declare, with Burke, that she would not, if she could, sacrifice even a kitling to the mere wantonness of despotic or revolutionary passion. She was a convinced Home Ruler, and believed fully in the virtue of that principle of self-government which has made our Canadian and Australasian colonies loyal and devoted members of the Imperial system. She was a deeply religious woman; but she was absolutely in favour of the freedom of religious worship, and the equality of all sects and denominations in our political

constitution. I have never known an intellect more clear or a nature more sympathetic. She was well qualified in every way to give advice to a statesman; and she could throw her soul into the poorest and pettiest interests of the humblest cottager nearer home. To my thinking, the average of humanity was lowered when this most noble and gifted woman was taken from the world.

Now, I do not want my readers to understand that with all her earnestness and practical purpose Lady Russell was a grave and serious woman whom ordinary human beings, not statesmen or philosophers, or poets or philanthropists, would find it hard to comprehend. Lady Russell was one of the brightest of women; she could talk about anything; she could enter, where occasion required, into the gossip of the village; she could enter into the triumph of the young fellow whose side had been successful in the cricket match; she could sympathise with the natural anxieties, hopes, and fears of the young girl who was preparing for her first ball. It seemed to me as if her mind and her tastes could never grow old. Since human beings began to record their observation of each other in writing, it has been noted that as we grow old, our tendency is to undervalue the things of the present, and to overvalue the things of the past. Most of us, as we watch ourselves, begin to find the confirmation of this common estimate. The great men, the great events, the great books and pictures of our youth, grow to such proportions, that, in spite of ourselves, they often seem to dwarf the great men, events, and pictures of our later days. The tendency of youth, it has been observed, is to say that nothing great was ever done till now; the tendency of old age is to say that nothing great is ever

done now. I could never discover any trace of this peculiarity in Lady Russell's later years. She must have known nearly all the great men and women who belonged to Western civilisation in her early days; and when we remember who some of these men and women were, we might fairly make allowance for her, even if she were to evince a somewhat languid interest in the men and women of a later time. But there was in her conversation no hint whatever of any such weakness. Her interest in the events going on around her was as keen as if she were not the widow of a statesman who, in his days of power, had borne a part in every great political crisis affecting the destinies of England. She took as fresh and keen an interest in the work of every rising author, painter, politician or musician, as if she had never known Wordsworth, and Moore and Tennyson, Dickens and Thackeray, Turner and Maclise, Gladstone and Bright; as if she had never heard Malibran, and Grisi, and Jenny Lind. Her letters on every passing subject worth discussion were marvels of keen observation, of just and yet most sympathetic judgment, and of a deathless interest in everything that concerned the progress and the welfare of humanity. I cannot help expressing an earnest hope that a biography of this most remarkable woman may yet be given to the world by some one of those who knew her most intimately, and who loved her best.

It would not be fitting that I should say much here of the surviving members of Lord Russell's family. Lady Agatha Russell I have had the honour of knowing for many years, and I hope to be always reckoned among her friends. Mr. George W. E. Russell, nephew of Lord John, I have known well both inside and outside the House of Commons. His public career is, I

trust, only opening. During his latest tenure of office as Under-Secretary of State for India, and for the Home Department in Mr. Gladstone's Administration, he exhibited a growing aptitude for Parliamentary debate in all its moods, which delighted, but did not surprise, those who knew him well, and impressed the House of Commons with a full conviction that in him there was a coming man. He lost his seat in Parliament, but only for a time we may be sure; he is far too promising a man to be long left out of the House of Commons. Meanwhile he has given to us a 'Life of Gladstone,' which every student of history must take account of, so long as the events and the men of Queen Victoria's reign have interest for human intellects and hearts. More lately, he has amused us all and delighted us as well by his 'Collections and Recollections,' for I suppose I must assume the book to be his, although, up to the time of my writing these lines, he has not seen fit to put his name on the titlepage. Thackeray said, when he had read 'Eöthen' through, and was putting down the wonderful book, 'Aut diabolus, aut Kinglake.' I may borrow the phrase, and give it a different application: 'Aut diabolus, aut George Russell,' I can confidently say when I think of 'Collections and Recollections.'

CHAPTER XXIII

CHARLES READE — ANTHONY TROLLOPE

MANY years ago an illustrated publication was started in London, which made, for a time, a certain sensation by the odd aggressiveness of its personal sketches and personal attacks. It was not exactly intended as a rival to 'Punch,' for its humour consisted mainly in portraiture or caricature, and not in letterpress; but whether it was intended or not to be a rival to 'Punch,' it is certain that there was not long any possible thought of rivalry, because the new publication died after a very brief existence. One of its cartoons I remember very well, although I regret to say that I have forgotten the name of the periodical itself. The cartoon I speak of was called 'Companions of the Bath,' and its idea was to picture a miscellaneous crowd of famous men and women enjoying a plunge in the waves at Dieppe or Etretat. Not many of the present generation could recognise all the celebrities who were depicted in various graceful and ungraceful attitudes. Everybody, indeed, would recognise Mr. Gladstone cleaving his way sternly and earnestly, as if opposing waves only gave him fresh resolve; and Charles Spurgeon floundering and puffing; and Tennyson pausing for a moment to look far out to sea. But the burly Alexandre Dumas would hardly be recognised by many, and Mario's graceful form is not familiar to the eyes of to-day's opera-

goers. One group comes back to my memory at present — it was made up of a heavy, bulky, grey-headed figure of remarkably ungainly appearance, whom a companion of slighter proportions is pushing off the plank into the water. These two were Charles Reade and Dion Boucicault; and the idea of the satirical artist evidently was to picture Boucicault in the attitude of one compelling his companion to take a plunge into the waves of a new sensationalism. This was at the time that Reade and Boucicault were working together in the story of 'Foul Play,' the story of which 'Punch' produced so amusing a parody under the title of 'Chicken Hazard.'

The portrait of Charles Reade was undoubtedly a caricature, and had an unmistakable quality of spitefulness in it. Reade was, in his way, a fine-looking man, big and heavy to be sure, but with a commanding forehead and clearly-cut, although heavy, features — a sort of Walt Whitman put into training for the part of a robust English vestryman, whereas the caricaturist depicted him as a sort of human gorilla. Reade was at that time at the zenith of his popularity. He had been slow in attaining recognition from what was then considered the higher school of criticism. It was the fashion for a long time with the critics of that school to treat him as a mere sensation novelist who wrote what we should now call 'shockers' in cheap weekly papers, for the delight of serving-women in the West End and errand-boys in the East End. Reade was, so far as I know, the first English novelist of really great abilities who ever published a serial story in one of the very cheap and popular weekly papers. Charles Dickens highly commended him for doing so, and advised Edmund Yates to follow his example, when Yates was

doubtful about accepting an offer made to him by some such periodical. Dickens pointed to the example of Charles Reade, and told Yates that no sensible author need have the least fear that a good story would not always find its level. But it was a long time, nevertheless, before the loftier school of critics found out that Charles Reade was really a novelist entitled to a place in all but the very foremost rank. The public, in fact, found out Reade long before the higher school of critics discovered him; and then, as Dr. Johnson said to Lord Chesterfield, 'He was known and did not need the recognition.' In the meantime Reade's temper, naturally irritable and disputatious, had been much exasperated by the contempt with which he felt himself to have been treated. To speak the truth frankly, Reade was an extremely self-conceited man. We are constantly told by the wise observers of human nature who construct aphorisms for our benefit, that real abilities and self-conceit never go together. Even within my own narrow experience, I have noted some instances to the contrary, and I should say that Charles Reade was one of them. He was a man of undoubtedly great abilities, a man of genius in his own way, a man who has written some books which will live with our literature; but he was, at the same time, one of the most self-conceited men I have ever met. I know, of my own knowledge, that he once wrote indignantly to the editor of an American monthly magazine complaining of an article on English novelists which appeared in its pages because the writer of the article put Charles Reade on a level lower than that of George Eliot. The writer of the article, as I also happen to know, was one of Reade's earliest and most genuine admirers, and wrote in the full belief that he wrote as an admirer

when he placed Charles Reade just a little below the author of the 'Mill on the Floss.'

I made the acquaintance of Charles Reade for the first time after my return from my earliest visit to the United States; and I could not help feeling great admiration for the thorough manliness of his character. There was a rugged companionableness, if I may use such an expression, about him which had a positive fascination in it. One could not imagine his doing a mean or an ignoble thing. I can quite understand that he must have been very dear to those who were really admitted into his friendship. But his indomitable pugnacity, his determination to resent every supposed offence, his intolerance of adverse criticism — even the most considerate and the most qualified — and his immense self-conceit, made enemies for him everywhere. If a disparaging line appeared in a criticism of one of his books he was not satisfied until he had written a letter of denunciation to the editor of the publication in which the obnoxious remark appeared. He would let nothing pass by him as the idle wind. I believe it is certain that he once condescended to the extraordinary littleness of threatening the editor of a paper with the withdrawal of the advertisements of his novels unless an apology were offered for some depreciating criticism of one of his books. Where another author would have seen only some inferior person's want of appreciation, Charles Reade saw the deadly hand of some malignant assassin. He was as ready with his threats of an action for damages as a politician out West in the old days would have been with his cowhide. His faith in his own capacity to do everything to which he set his hand carried him so far that he insisted on undertaking the task of dramatising one or two of his own novels; and

so turned a brilliant and powerful story into a weak and futile play. I remember one of the dramas which was thus prepared for the stage by his own skill alone, disdainful of any professional playwright's aid. There was a thrilling scene in this play which represented a number of evil-minded socialistic conspirators planning some desperate scheme for their own aggrandisement and the injury of honest labour. While the plot was going on, a window at the back of the stage was suddenly opened, and an enemy of the conspiring band calmly put in his head and shoulders and listened to the plot. Another of Reade's plays intended, as nearly all his efforts were, to show up terrible defects in some existing system, created a stormy scene in the theatre on the night of its first performance. A number of the audience in the stalls got up and denounced certain passages in the play; others rose to defend the piece, and to insist upon its accuracy; speeches were made on the one side and on the other; the audience seemed to have converted themselves for the moment into a sort of debating society, and the whole exhibition was something like that which was seen at a much later date on the first performance of the play founded upon Tennyson's 'Promise of May.' Charles Reade added to the storm by writing a letter to the papers, in which he insisted that some of the attacks made upon him had been made by theatrical critics who were notoriously his enemies, and declaring that one critic whom he named had risen up in the stalls to denounce the play, and had afterwards in his published criticism complimented himself, the critic, for the part he had taken in condemning the piece by word of mouth. Thereupon, one of the assailed critics replied by letter, declaring that Charles Reade's own nephew was one of the very few who stood

up in the stalls to say a single word in defence of Charles Reade's drama. The whole business immensely amused the less serious part of the public, and greatly scandalised the other part.

About one of Reade's plays, which had to do with the treatment of criminals in prison, an amusing story used to be told at the time. The play was brought out at a West End theatre, and one of its sensational scenes exhibited the interior of a prison with the prisoners going through their penal work. The piece had a great success; and for a long time kept on drawing crowded audiences. The manager of a popular theatre at the East End was strongly urged to bring out the play in his house. He paid a visit to the West End theatre; saw the piece; and then declined to have anything to do with it. 'It may do here, in the West End,' he explained; 'but the prison scenes would not have a ghost of a chance at my theatre. Bless you, my gallery boys know too much about it; they've all been through the mill themselves, and you could n't palm off that sort of thing on them as a real picture of prison life.'

Reade's hot temper once got him into serious trouble with so awkward an antagonist as the late Charles Mathews. As most of the elders will remember, Charles Mathews was not only the most brilliant light comedian of his day upon the English stage, but he was a master of bright talk and keen sarcasm. He was performing at one time in Drury Lane Theatre, then under the management of Mr. E. T. Smith, a very well known personage of that day. Charles Reade had once written a play called 'Gold,' which, it seems, was acted at Drury Lane Theatre, but which I confess I never saw, never read, and, indeed, never heard of until the occurrence of the little controversy I am about to record.

Reade, one night, presented himself for admission at the door of Drury Lane Theatre and was refused; and, thereupon, he wrote the following letter to Charles Mathews:

'Garrick Club, Covent Garden, November 28.

'Dear Sir, — I was stopped the other night at the stage-door of Drury Lane Theatre, by people whom I remember to have seen at the Lyceum under your reign.

'This is the first time such an affront was ever put upon me in any theatre where I had produced a play, and is without precedent unless when an affront was intended. As I never forgive an affront, I am not hasty to suppose one intended. It is very possible that this was done inadvertently; and the present stage-list may have been made out without the older claims being examined.

'Will you be so kind as to let me know at once whether this is so, and if the people who stopped me at the stage-door are yours; will you protect the author of "Gold," etc., from any repetition of such an annoyance?

'I am, dear Sir,

'Yours faithfully,

'Charles Reade.'

To this imperious demand Mr. Reade received next day the following genial answer:

'T. R., Drury Lane, November 29.

'Dear Sir, — If ignorance is bliss on general occasions, on the present it certainly would be folly to be wise. I am therefore happy to be able to inform you that I am ignorant of your having produced a play at this theatre; ignorant that you are the author of "Gold"; ignorant

of the merits of that play; ignorant that your name has been erased from the list at the stage-door; ignorant that it had ever been on it; ignorant that you had presented yourself for admittance; ignorant that it had been refused; ignorant that such a refusal was without precedent; ignorant that in the man who stopped you you recognised one of the persons lately with me at the Lyceum; ignorant that the doorkeeper was ever in that theatre; ignorant that you never forgive an affront; ignorant that any had been offered; ignorant of when, how, or by whom the list was made out, and equally so by whom it was altered.

'Allow me to add that I am quite incapable of offering any discourtesy to a gentleman I have barely the pleasure of knowing, and moreover have no power whatever to interfere with Mr. Smith's arrangements or disarrangements; and, with this wholesale admission of ignorance, incapacity, and impotence, believe me

'Faithfully yours,

'C. T. MATHEWS.'

The dramatic critic of a London morning paper was allowed to see the correspondence and to make a copy of it; and he published it in his paper, but only in a very guarded and mysterious way. The names of the writers were left out, and so, also, were the names of the play and the theatre; and the readers of the paper were therefore only allowed to know that a correspondence had taken place between two unnamed persons, in which one correspondent had decidedly got much the better of the other. Some time later a New York magazine brought out the letters and the names; but I do not know that the whole story has ever before been told in England, and as it can hurt nobody's feelings now, I

venture to give to the world the correspondence just as its writers left it. I believe Charles Reade and Charles Mathews became good friends after the interchange of letters; and that Reade bore no malice for the sharp touches which he had received from the light hand of the incomparable comedian.

Charles Reade's novels were very popular in America; indeed, they got their full recognition there before they got it in Reade's own country. The manager of an American lecture agency was very anxious to induce Reade to give a series of lectures in the United States. That was one of his objects in making a visit to England. I had known him on the other side of the ocean; and I met him also on this side. He told me of his idea with regard to Charles Reade, and I thought it a very good idea, if only Reade could be induced to undertake the enterprise. Some time after, I met my American friend again, and I asked him what had been the result of his visit to Charles Reade.

He shook his head, and told me the visit had been a dead failure. I said I felt sorry, but that I had thought it would be so, as I did not believe Reade could be induced to deliver lectures. My friend, however, explained to me that there was no difficulty of that kind, that Reade was very willing to undertake the course of lectures; but that his terms were absolutely impossible. Then he went on to tell me that Reade asked him how much Dickens had received for his American readings; and when he was told the amount, or the approximate amount, he said he would undertake the project if he were guaranteed an equal sum. The American agent pointed out to him that the success of Dickens as a reader in America had been something beyond all comparison or competition, and that no other author, how-

ever eminent, could hope to have anything like the same popularity, or to get anything like the same amount of money. Reade was inexorable. He said he would go for what Dickens got, but that he would not take one penny less. So the proposal came to nothing. Now, it may be, that the answer given by Reade, was only his odd humorous way of getting out of an arrangement into which he felt no inclination to enter. From what I had myself heard Reade say on more than one occasion, I should have been inclined to think, as I told my American friend, that it would be impossible to induce him to undertake a lecturing tour in the States. But the American agent persisted in declaring that Reade was quite willing to go, but would not allow it to be said that he considered himself cheaper in the market than Charles Dickens. The truth is that, according to the general opinion of those in London who came into personal contact with him, or who read his almost incessant letters of indignant remonstrance to critics and to newspapers, the character of Charles Reade was disfigured by a self-conceit which seemed to amount to something like mania, and an impatience of criticism which occasionally rendered him all but a laughing-stock to the general public. Seldom, indeed, in the literary history of the century has high and genuine artistic capacity been associated with such a morbidness of self-conceit.

I hope my readers, especially my literary readers, will not find fault with me for dwelling somewhat emphatically on this strange weakness in the nature of Charles Reade. I am not now engaged in a study of Reade's qualities as an author, for this is not a critical essay; and I take it that criticism has long since made up its mind as to the great gifts and the obvious defects of

Reade as a writer of fiction. I want to describe the man as we all knew him at a time when his literary reputation had reached its well-deserved height. If I were writing about Brougham, I should certainly not think it right to allow my readers to suppose that he was a man of gentle and gracious manners, and free from any taint of arrogance or vanity. I have not refrained, when giving some recollections of Carlyle, from conveying the idea that the author of 'Sartor Resartus' was now and then somewhat rude of speech. But I am very far indeed from wishing to convey the idea that Charles Reade, beside being a novelist of all but the highest rank, was otherwise merely a wildly self-conceited and incessantly quarrelsome person. Reade had a fine and noble nature under all his defects of temper and his inordinate self-esteem. No man was more chivalrous to stand by a cause which he believed to be just, or a friend whom he believed to be injured. He deliberately spoilt some of his finest conceptions because he insisted on carrying a moral purpose with him in the writing of some of his stories; because he had set his heart on arousing the attention of the public to some evil in our social system which he believed capable of remedy, and because he preferred to sacrifice the artistic success of the book rather than to divert his narrative from its appointed end and object. For myself, I confess that I preferred his stories which had no particular moral purpose, his 'Peg Woffingtons' and 'Christie Johnstones,' and, above all, his 'Cloister and the Hearth,' to the elaborate stories which were laboriously designed to show up the defects in our prison discipline, and the management of our private lunatic asylums. But one must give him full credit for his humanitarian intentions; and one must recognise, also, the fact that he

accomplished the task he set before him in a manner which probably no other novel writer has ever done. No author ever indulged in a fairer piece of self-glorification than that contained in the last sentence of 'Put Yourself in His Place': 'I have taken a few undeniable truths out of many, and have laboured to make my readers realise those appalling facts of the day which most men know, but not one in a thousand comprehends, and not one in a hundred thousand realises, until fiction — which, whatever you may have been told to the contrary, is the highest, widest, noblest, and greatest of all the arts — comes to his aid, studies, penetrates, digests the hard facts of chronicles and blue books, and makes their dry bones live.'

The manner in which Reade laid himself out for this kind of work had in it all the patience, all the absorption, all the careful study and observation that the devotee of some scientific problem might give to what he believed to be the one calling of his life. When he had some particular subject on his mind he got into his possession every evidence bearing on it of which he could lay hold. He collected Blue Books, newspapers, pamphlets, treatises, statistics; he ransacked far and wide for documentary evidences and opinions; nothing came too heavy or too light to be stored up as part of his material. He compiled great ledgers of extracts, he filled tome after tome of them, carefully selected and pasted in according to their order; and he thus had made for himself a little library of reference books before he set to work at the story which was to be made up out of all this raw material. No permanent official in a Government department could have worked harder to construct a satisfactory case by means of which his chief might meet an elaborate party attack in

the House of Commons, than Charles Reade laboured to accumulate and arrange the material for a single novel which had for its purpose the exposure of some evil in our legislative or social system. The truth is that, apart from the generous philanthropic purpose Reade had in all such work, it suited the exuberant vitality of his nature; it gave his overmastering energy something to do; it found employment for his whole stock of intellectual and physical enterprise, and became for the time the end and object of his existence. Nor was Reade only active in the hunting down of wrong-doing when the hunt was to end in the publication of a stirring romance. He could easily work himself up to just the same zeal for the redress of some grievance which only concerned a private victim, and was never intended to be put into print, and could never bring to Reade himself any manner of public honour or reward. I remember more than one instance in which Reade took infinite trouble and pains, and showed all his characteristic energy and courage, in the endeavour to get wrong righted in the case of some quite obscure person who had no other recommendation to Reade than the fact that he believed himself to be the victim of injustice, and that Reade believed in his story. I think, indeed, it might have been said of Charles Reade, as Macaulay says of Burke, that the thought of unmerited suffering made his blood boil in his veins.

My own personal experience of Reade as a worker had not, however, anything to do with those episodes in his career — I only heard of them from others; but I had the best possible reasons for believing all that I heard of them to be true; and all that I heard certainly tended to make me regard Charles Reade in a

decidedly heroic light. I worked with him now and again on an association which was formed in London to take some action or other with regard to the troublous question of American copyright for English books. I am sorry to say that at this distance of time I do not quite remember from whom came the initiative of this movement; but I remember the fact that among those who took part in it were Herbert Spencer, Charles Reade, William Black, the novelist, Edward Jenkins, F. W. Chesson, and many others; and I distinctly recollect that Reade was one of the quietest and most methodical of workers, neither dogmatic nor self-asserting, and quite unlike, in general, the idea which many might have formed of so vehement and impassioned a controversialist. After this time I saw but little of Reade, and before long my absorption into Parliamentary and political life withdrew me from his range altogether. I heard with deep regret of the growing illness which darkened his closing days; and, at last, the extinction of a life animated by so noble a general purpose, and so constant a desire to be the helper of unhappy men.

As I have introduced the name of Dion Boucicault in connection with that of Charles Reade, I may, perhaps, record one or two casual reminiscences of the brilliant playwright and actor. Boucicault was half French, half Irish by race; and he combined in himself and in his acting many of the distinctive characteristics of the Frenchman and the Irishman. He was certainly, on the whole, the best Irish comedian I have ever seen, because he could blend the broadly humorous and the delicately pathetic into one character, into one situation, into one sentence, as I have not seen it done by any other theatrical delineator of Irish humour. Of

late years, Boucicault took great interest in the Irish National movement here and in America; and expressed a frank sympathy with the general action of the Irish Parliamentary Party. He came to see me several times in the House of Commons during some of our long struggles against this or that Ministry; and I had many talks with him in the old Conference Room on the right of the steps ascending from the cloak-room to the Members' entrance into the lobby. I remember having sometimes a sort of wondering doubt as to whether Boucicault could have been forming any idea of offering to help us in our battle by becoming the representative of an Irish constituency. What an auxiliary he would have been, if only he could have made up his mind to any such self-sacrificing enterprise! How delightfully he would have chaffed the ministerial orators; with what bewildering dexterity he would have evaded the impending intervention of Mr. Speaker! But Boucicault never made to me any suggestion of the kind, although I feel not the slightest doubt that his declarations of sympathy with the National cause were absolutely sincere, and so we never had the chance of seeing the author and the actor of 'Arrah-na-Pogue,' in a part entirely new to him, unrehearsed by him, and utterly unexpected by the public.

I remember once talking to Boucicault on a very different subject one day when I had the pleasure of dining with him at his hotel in Boston, Massachusetts. He was giving me some interesting recollections of his early experiences as an actor; and he raised a curious question as to the different standards of theatrical propriety which different generations choose to set up. In his younger days, he said, no English comic actress, no English ballet-girl would consent to appear upon the

stage for a single moment in the scanty semi-transparent drapery which in later days is seen every night in every pantomime and opera-bouffe. Such an exhibition, he went on to say with some emphasis, would have been considered absolutely indecent and intolerable in those days, while, at the time of our conversation, neither the performers nor the public felt in the slightest degree shocked by it. So much for the superiority of the decent past over the indecent present. But, then, he had a good deal to say on the other side of the question; in his early days an actress, even of the best class, would think nothing of speaking a passage or many passages in some comedy containing words and phrases, jests and allusions, which the lowest class of actress would not utter now in the lowest order of theatre, and which the audience would not listen to if she were to attempt to utter them. Which time, then, has the advantage on the side of decorum? Is it better to stick to modest clothing and disregard modesty of language, or to be reckless about drapery and careful about words? I was not able to suggest any ethical principle by virtue of which the distinction could be drawn in favour of the one time and against the other, and neither was he; and so we had to leave the question to settle itself, or to remain, for the time and perhaps for all time, unsettled.

The name of Charles Reade brings up to my mind, whether by the force of association or the force of contrast, the name of Anthony Trollope. My first recollections of Anthony Trollope go back a long way indeed. I do not think I can have been twenty years old when I first saw Trollope, and I saw him under somewhat peculiar conditions. He appeared as a witness in a case which was tried before a Judge of Assize at the Court

House of Tralee in the County of Kerry; and I happened to be attending the court as correspondent for a Cork newspaper. Trollope was then employed as an inspector under the Irish Post-office; and it had fallen to his lot to be commissioned to inquire into some irregularities in the transmission of letters containing money through certain parts of the country. In those far-off days, when the post-office order and the postal note had not yet become popular, it was a common practice to send money in the crude form of gold and silver coin from one place to another. Trollope started out upon his quest, and he adopted an ingenious plan. He travelled by the ordinary mail-coach; and before he began his journey he enclosed a marked sovereign to an address at the town which lay farthest along the track which the coach had to travel. After the coach had passed through the first town on his way, Trollope announced himself, at the first place where the coach stopped to change horses, as a post-office inspector, and claimed his right to examine the mail-bags. He did so; and found his letter all right with the seal unbroken and the heavy sovereign still weighing it. The missive was accordingly put back into the mail-bag again and the journey was resumed. Thus the inspector passed from one town to another, until, before his journey had nearly drawn to its close, he went through a village, on emerging from which he had, as usual, recourse to the mail-bag and found that his letter had been opened and carefully resealed, and that no coin was inside. He promptly went back to the village he had left, and called the police into requisition, and the marked sovereign was found to be in possession of the post-mistress of the place.

Thereupon a prosecution was instituted. Now, the

post-mistress was young and rather pretty, and had a good many friends and backers in the neighbourhood; and her supporters provided her with counsel in order that the best case might be made out for her at the assizes. The leading counsel who was engaged for the defence was Isaac Butt, the great Irish advocate whom I have already mentioned, more than once, in these pages, and who is best known to modern readers as the first leader of a Home Rule Party in the House of Commons. Anthony Trollope was the principal witness for the prosecution, and Butt's whole case depended on the chance of his bewildering Trollope, and causing him, somehow, to bungle or to break down in his evidence. In those days an extent of license was allowed to cross-examining counsel, which the more rigorous practices of our law courts at present would render wholly impossible. Butt was a splendid cross-examiner, and did everything he could to baffle and bewilder the post-office inspector. He produced in court one of Trollope's own novels — one of the very few novels he had published up to that time — and he proceeded to cross-examine Trollope as to the meaning of certain passages in the book which professed to describe a trial in an Irish court of criminal law. Trollope was asked whether he wrote this passage and that passage and the other, whether he had described the judge on the bench in these particular words, and the garnishing of the bench in these other words; and whether he held by his humorous descriptions as a just and faithful picture of an Irish court; and whether his description of the countenances and manners of the gentlemen in the jury-box was intended to apply only to an imaginary jury, or meant as a deliberate caricature of Irish juries in general. Butt's object was, in part, to bewilder

Trollope and make him lose his temper, and so get into a condition of mind which might lead to his blundering in some way when he came to give the material part of his evidence; and in part also to prejudice the jury against him as a cockney slanderer who was endeavouring to cast ridicule on the institutions of the Green Isle. Butt, however, failed completely in his attempt; he could not puzzle Trollope, or bewilder him, or even cause him to lose his temper; nor did Trollope ever fail to give an effective and droll answer to every effective and droll question. The contest became a most amusing trial of skill, readiness, and temper between the clever counsel and the clever witness. Butt tried his best to make Trollope contradict himself with regard to the peculiar marking of the gold coin in the letter; but Trollope stuck to his position, and maintained with great force and success that the very oddity of the mark on the coin was the best security for its practical recognition. It was a duel in which neither combatant for a moment lost his temper or his self-control, and the spectators of the scene were filled with intense delight. At last the cross-examination came to an end. Butt released the witness with the good-humouredly sarcastic words, 'Good morning, triumphant post-office inspector'; to which Trollope retorted with the equally good-humoured and sarcastic words, 'Good morning, triumphant cross-examiner'; and Butt himself felt, I think, that he had not had quite the better of it in the trial of skill.

At that time I had only just come to know of Anthony Trollope as a novelist; and a great many years passed away before I met him in London, when he was at the very height of his reputation. Many times during our occasional meetings in the literary circles of the capital I have called to mind that odd scene in the

Tralee Court House; and have been somewhat amused by the fact that the chief impression that Trollope then made on me was not so much even by his cleverness as by his imperturbable good-humour. Imperturbable good-humour was not, I think, usually regarded by post-office officials or by literary men as Trollope's especial characteristic. He had the reputation rather of a man with a rugged rasping temper, and a masterful way. We all know — he has told us himself — of the patient, methodical, dogged way in which he worked at his novels; and I have often thought that, on that distant day in the Tralee Court House, he must have noticed the expression of anticipated triumph beaming on Isaac Butt's broad, rugged, good-humoured face; and must have set it out as a task for himself to keep his temper to the very last, and not to give his opponent the slightest chance of a triumphant laugh at his expense.

Trollope had, during a great part of his life, a strong ambition to be a member of the House of Commons. I heard him say once that the only door in London which he ever had a keen desire to see opened to him was that of the Representative Chamber at Westminster; and in this he was disappointed. He was only once, I think, a candidate for a seat in Parliament, and he was not successful. At the time I was very anxious for his success, not because I felt sure that he would make a Parliamentary reputation, but because it would have gratified him to obtain a seat in the House of Commons. In his novel 'Phineas Finn' he has given one of the best descriptions known to me of the feelings of a new member just before he rises to deliver his maiden speech. It used to be said at the time that in describing his hero, Phineas Finn, he had in his mind the

political career of one man, and the personal appearance of another; that he combined the early Parliamentary days of my dear old friend, the late Sir John Pope Hennessy, with the picturesque presence and captivating manners of one who is still a well-known figure in London society, although, perhaps, he has not quite so ornamental a figure just now as he had in the distant day when Trollope's novel was written. Trollope was endowed with a remarkably clear judgment as regarded public affairs. Nearly forty years before the event he not merely predicted the certainty of the struggle between Spain and the United States with regard to Cuba, but he predicted in the conduct of Spain the very reasons which sooner or later must have made an armed struggle inevitable. With the same temper of cool observation, Trollope saw from the very beginning what so few London literary men, and men in London society did, the result of the great Civil War in America. Trollope was in the States at the time when the battle of Bull Run took place, in which the Southern forces obtained a complete victory. On this side of the ocean, and especially in London, the vast majority of people accepted the defeat of Bull Run as a fatal event for the Northern cause. On the other side Trollope observed that, wherever he went amongst the Northerners, he found no attempt made to deny that a defeat had taken place, or to minimise its importance. He was met everywhere with the words, or some such words, 'Yes, we 've been badly whipped this time; but we 'll do better before long.' Trollope made up his mind that the men who take defeat in that sort of spirit are just the men who are likely to convert first defeat into final victory.

The later years of Anthony Trollope's working career gave a curious denial to a doctrine once laid down to

me with much emphasis by a great London publisher of popular novels. The publisher declared that when once a novelist had got his public, the public never would leave him. 'The trouble,' he said, 'is to get hold of the public; but once the novelist has got it, you may take my word for it, his public never will leave him, it will last out his lifetime anyhow; he could n't shake it off even if he tried.' I was but a young beginner at the time, and knew little about the matter, and I took the words of my esteemed friend, the publisher, as gospel, and could only envy the happy lot of the novelist who had actually got his public. But I am afraid that my friend's doctrine was not always borne out by those hard facts which interfere with the universal recognition of so many doctrines. Trollope's literary fame certainly went through the three stages of slow growth, splendid maturity, and steady decline. In his later days his readers fell off to an astonishing degree, and time almost seemed to have come round, as in the case of Cassius, and where he did begin, there did he end, with a sadly limited circulation. He took his decaying popularity with as much composure as he had taken his early lack of popularity, as doggedly and uncomplainingly as he took his frequent falls in those hunting-fields which at one time he loved so well. He had made his name, however, in the meantime; and his best novels have a secure place in the literature of Queen Victoria's reign. I am still sorry that he was not successful in obtaining a seat in the House of Commons. I am sorry, first, because success would have gratified him, and next, because I have always thought that a chance still remained, even after Disraeli's early books, for a great novel of English Parliamentary life, and that Anthony Trollope was the man who could

have written it. Thackeray, too, failed in obtaining a seat in the House of Commons; but I cannot feel any regret that he was kept altogether for other work. We are commonly told that Dickens had no Parliamentary ambition, and would not have entered the House of Commons if a constituency had begged him on its bended knees. But this surely is a mistake. Whatever Dickens may have thought and resolved at a later period of his career, it is quite certain, I take it, that at one season of his popularity he was very anxious for a seat in Parliament. All consideration of that question may now, however, as Egmont says in the tragedy, 'be quietly put aside.' I only hold to my position that Trollope could have written from the inside a good novel of Parliamentary life, and that I am sorry he did not get the chance of writing it.

CHAPTER XXIV

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL

I BEGAN to know Lord Randolph Churchill personally after the General Election of 1880, which threw out the Tory Government and brought the Liberal Party back into power, with Mr. Gladstone, of course, as Prime Minister. I had been in the House of Commons for about a year before that event; but I had little opportunity of making Lord Randolph's personal acquaintance. We sat on different sides of the House, and that, as most people know, counts for a great deal — men sitting on different sides are not much thrown together in a casual way. After the Election of 1880, we both sat in Opposition and my habitual seat happened to be just behind his, and thus we naturally became acquaintances. I have already described the first time I ever met Lord Randolph in private — at the house of the charming hostess who is now Lady Jeune. Lord Randolph was the animating spirit of the Fourth Party, as it was called, and his one great desire just then was to wreck the Liberal Government. As matters stood that too was, for the time, the desire of my Nationalist friends and myself. We naturally worked together in many struggles, the Fourth Party and the Irish Nationalist Party. Lord Randolph had always the kindliest sympathy with Ireland and Irish sentiments. I came to know him very well, politically and personally, after

that time, and I am afraid we were often conspirators in some plan of attack on the existing Government. Like everyone else I soon came to acknowledge the charm of his humour, his breezy, school-boyish delight in a contest of any kind, his fresh conversational power, and the readiness of his repartee. We had some friends in common, and during several years I met him often — I mean outside the House of Commons.

It is a dangerous thing to give specimens of a man's wit or humour: so much has to be led up to by the circumstances; so much depends upon the voice and the manner. Still let me try. A lady once at whose house I was dining was talking of a subscription-list opened to raise a fund for the benefit of the wives of distressed Irish landlords. 'I am entirely in sympathy with them,' she said, earnestly, 'but I have n't given any money.' Lord Randolph stroked his moustache and gravely said: 'I see — your sympathy does n't take that form.' We all felt the humour of the suggestion — as if there was any other form of sympathy which could be of the slightest use under the conditions. The words have been of familiar use to many of us since that time. It is such a graceful excuse for the getting out of some particular duty. Our sympathy does not take that form — no, not that precise form. Something else if you will — ask us something easier — but not that. Montaigne or Lamb, if either could have been to the front, might have written a delightful essay on Lord Randolph's happy exposition of so many people's sense of duty.

Lord Randolph told me that when he first entered the House of Commons he knew absolutely nothing. He had learned something, he explained, at school and college; but it had all been washed out of his mind, and he had come into Parliament with a judgment

absolutely impartial — 'unprejudiced by any previous acquaintance with any conceivable subject of debate.' This, of course, was humorous exaggeration. Lord Randolph was fond of thus 'giving himself away.' But I believe he had forgotten most that he had learned, and he soon set himself to make up the deficiency. He had a marvellous capacity for studying up a subject, and he spared himself no labour when he had such a task in hand. He even looked up his classics again. He once delighted the House by the affected pomposity with which he declaimed a passage from Horace. It was in one of his periodical attacks upon the late Mr. W. H. Smith. I quite forget what it was all about; but I remember he dragged in a contrast between the splendour of Mr. Smith's abode and 'the modest roof which shelters from the storm the humble individual who now has the honour to address you,' and then came the classical citation. It was school-boy drollery, to be sure; but the House was delighted with the fun of the whole thing, the downright burlesque of Parliamentary pedantry. Lord Randolph was an eager reader of novels, and had a good deal of critical discernment. He once talked to me about a novel, then new — we used to have many talks about novels during long Parliamentary debates. 'It is n't a mere novel,' he declared with almost impassioned earnestness; 'it 's a section cut out of London life and presented to the reading public.' I have said that Lord Randolph was fond of 'giving himself away.' At a dinner-party several years ago there was some talk about Lord Beaconsfield's 'Endymion,' and the cruel caricature of Thackeray which it contained. Lord Randolph professed to justify it. 'But surely,' somebody said, 'you would not yourself make such an attack on a man who was dead?'

'Of course,' he replied, 'that is the very thing I would do, for then he could not possibly reply to me.' He could afford to say it, for we all knew that that was the very thing he would not do.

'For Heaven's sake,' he said to me once, 'don't tell ——,' a certain person whom he named, 'what we are proposing to do; or if you will tell him, don't let it be under a pledge of secrecy. For if you pledge him to secrecy, the whole story will be over London in an hour.' When the Tory Government came into power in 1885, and Lord Randolph became Secretary of State for India, I happened to meet him at the house of a friend. I assailed him — good-humouredly, I hope — because he had thrown over the Irish Party and the Irish cause. 'Look here,' he replied with imperturbable gravity, 'I made the very best fight I could for you, and I did n't succeed; and now the only thing I can do is to make the very best fight I can against you.' The answer was characteristic; it is not to be taken literally, of course. It was Lord Randolph giving himself away again. He continued to be, as far as he could be, a kindly friend to Ireland. He followed his own career: followed his own star; and he said so. 'There 's a good deal of the Auberon Herbert,' he remarked to me later on, 'about Lord Carnarvon,' speaking of the late Lord Carnarvon, Auberon Herbert's brother, 'a good deal of the Don Quixote. I am not that sort of man at all.' But whenever it came in his way to say a kind word for Ireland, he said it. Whenever it came in his way to do a good thing for Ireland, he did it.

I sat near to Lord Randolph one day at a dinner-party given by a London lady, who had a strong liking, which she frankly allowed, for making the acquaintance of anybody who had acquired celebrity and was much written

about in the newspapers. She was telling us good-humouredly of the fact that she had been lucky enough to be taken in to dinner a few days before by a rising English public man, who was at that time an object of special dread and dislike to the political party whose opinions our hostess shared. Some one of our company suggested encouragingly that she ought to look out for an opportunity of being taken in to dinner by Mr. Parnell. Lord Randolph was always a little hard of hearing, and therefore sometimes spoke rather louder than the occasion required. He had heard our hostess's story and the suggestion made by one of her guests, and he had a comment to offer thereupon to his next neighbour, which, however, he delivered in a tone that made it audible throughout the whole company. 'Mr. Parnell,' said Lord Randolph, 'has the inestimable advantage of being a gentleman, which certainly can't be said for the other fellow, anyhow.' Much amusement and some amazement went round the table at this decisive and outspoken mode of classifying two public men for the hearing of a mixed company.

There used to be a good deal of talk at one time about Lord Randolph Churchill's dealings with the Irish National Party. I am not inclined in these volumes to concern myself much with the doings of political parties; but I may say that there were never any dealings between Lord Randolph Churchill and the Irish Parliamentary Party, the history of which might not have been published fully in all the daily papers without bringing the slightest discredit on anyone concerned in the transactions. Lord Randolph, however, was sometimes greatly amused at the wild conjectures which were hazarded every day upon the subject. One night I met him at a large and crowded reception in a

London house. I exchanged a few words with him and was about to pass on, when, with a look of mysterious meaning, he drew me into a corner. There he held me carefully by the button-hole, and began to talk to me in an undertone. What he really said was, in substance, something like this. 'You see that fellow yonder,' and he mentioned the name of a well-known writer of political gossip for some of the papers; 'he has his eye upon us, and I am quite sure he thinks you and I are concocting some tremendous political machination. Now I want to confirm him in this belief; and so, if you don't mind, we 'll keep talking together in this sort of way about any subject you like, and you 'll see if he does n't have a fine half-column of startling news in some of the papers to-morrow morning.' I was quite willing to fall in with Lord Randolph's humour; and accordingly there did appear something in certain of the papers next day about a plot going on between Lord Randolph and the Irish National Party which must be fraught with danger to the most cherished traditions of our Parliamentary system.

Lord Randolph always took a keen delight in disturbing the minds of alarmists, and giving suspicious persons the best reason for finding out plots where no manner of plot existed. On another occasion a member of the Irish Party, speaking in the House of Commons, was charging the Irish officers of the Government with having done something or other very unfair and very culpable in some matter which concerned Irish administration. The speaker declared that he had every proof of the justice of his charge, and that the proof had been supplied to him by a member of that House who had no connection with Irish politics, and who would be quite willing, if occasion required, to make a full statement

on the subject. Lord Randolph, who was sitting in his usual place on the lowest bench just beneath the gangway, looked suddenly round towards the speaker, uttered a loud 'Hear, hear,' and then settled back into his seat with the manner of one who is conscious of having inadvertently betrayed himself. Most of the members present assumed that Lord Randolph must be the person referred to, and naturally expected that he would take part in the debate. Lord Randolph, however, did not rise to speak; and when it came to the turn of a member of the Government to address the House, he commented on the surprise which was felt at the silence of the noble Lord, and added that after what they had all heard, and what, he said with peculiar emphasis, they had all seen and understood, it was naturally the common expectation that the noble Lord would not fail to offer some observations of his own on the subject under discussion. Nothing came of it, however; Lord Randolph was silent, and the Government and the majority of members in the House were puzzled. This was exactly the condition of things which Lord Randolph wanted to bring about; he wanted to puzzle the Government and most of the members of the House. He knew nothing whatever of the subject under discussion, except that he knew very well he could not possibly be the person alluded to by the Irish member who had spoken. But it just occurred to him at the moment that it would be rather a good joke to puzzle the Government by a seemingly half-unconscious revelation of himself as the person referred to; and he acted on the spur of his momentary humour. He told some of us afterwards that his only motive was to bewilder the Government, and make them believe in the existence of some new plot between the Irish Nationalists

and the Fourth Party. There was certainly in Lord Randolph a curious combination of the school-boy and the statesman. So long as health endured he had all the school-boy's enjoyment of a prank, and he delighted in bewildering a solemn Secretary of State, just as much as a school-boy might have delighted in disarranging the books and the papers of an over-exacting pedagogue.

But those who had many dealings with him in the House of Commons, and whom he admitted in any degree to his confidence, knew well how much of the statesman there was in him long before his conduct in office, and the reason for his sudden resignation of office, had given to the whole country the full measure of his statesmanlike capacity. There was something, too, of the school-boy in his impatience and intolerance of the slow and steady-going political guides, whom, after Disraeli's removal from the House of Commons, the Conservative Party used to look up to as its leaders. Lord Randolph generally spoke of them as the 'old gang,' and he lumped them all together after the fashion of the school-boy to whom all his teachers alike seem antiquated bores and nothing else. One, at least, of the Conservative leaders in the House of Commons, Sir Stafford Northcote, had undoubtedly many of the high qualities of statesmanship in him, and would have been, in quiet times, well capable of leading the political party and even of controlling the affairs of a state. But Lord Randolph was impatient with calm and slow-moving statesmanship; and he did not always trouble himself to draw much distinction between the head of one department and the head of another. He wanted them all to look alive and keep doing something, and he came to believe that no good could be really done except by the admission of new men into the old acres

of the Conservative Party. It must be allowed that the three men who, with him, formed the Fourth Party, were all men of remarkable ability, originality, and vigour. Each of the three has since given distinct proof of intellectual force, and of the fresh capacity that rises superior to mere routine. The benches of Toryism in the House of Commons could not possibly have supplied three better men for the kind of work which Lord Randolph Churchill just then particularly wanted to have done, to show to the country that there was a new order of Conservatism coming up which did not believe in mere routine and antique tradition, and had no faith whatever in the favourite Conservative idea that the wisdom of our ancestors had settled everything for all time, so far as the political and social government of England were concerned. The House of Commons, at all events, had good reason to thank Lord Randolph and his three comrades for making many a night lively and useful which, but for them, might have been valueless and dull.

I am sorry I never had the chance of seeing Lord Randolph during his short and most successful leadership of the House of Commons. I had to go to the United States, and I missed all that brilliant chapter in his history. We have it on the authority of men thoroughly qualified to speak, and not inclined by any sympathies or affinities of party to an over-estimate of Lord Randolph, that, as a financial Minister, he showed extraordinary capacity for his work, an original faculty of combination, a mastery of minute detail, and the most patient devotion to the daily routine of his business. The later passages of his career in the House of Commons were, as everyone knows, profoundly melancholy; he had fallen out of health, and he had sought what

may be called desperate remedies in the hope of recovering his health, incessant travel, which might have tried the physical capacity of a strong man. Of late years I had not met him often; but I am glad to remember that whenever we did meet, we met on the friendliest terms. I think the last London house in which he and I came together was the home of that most friendly and delightful hostess, under whose roof politicians of all shades of opinion, men and women of fashion, men and women of letters, poets, painters, and journalists, are made welcome — I mean Lady Dorothy Nevill. The last time I ever spoke with him was on one of the nights just before the close of his career, when he made a speech in the House of Commons which produced the most melancholy impression on everyone who heard it — on political opponent as well as on political ally. Lord Randolph's physical strength was gone: his once powerful voice had become hoarse, and low, and husky; the very efforts which he spasmodically used to force it to do its wonted duty only made it more painfully clear that its tones were no longer at his command. Every mind was made sorrowful by the force of the contrast of the broken invalid of that evening and the high-spirited, indomitable Lord Randolph of a few sessions before, the Lord Randolph with the exuberant spirits of a boy, and the delight in battle which belongs to the conquering heart, whether in Parliament or on the field of actual warfare. Later in the evening I met Lord Randolph in one of the division lobbies, and we sat together and had some talk. He was in better spirits than I could have expected; and he recalled some bright memories of the stirring old days, when we used to be Parliamentary allies. Then he began, after his former fashion, to talk about novels

and to tell me of some story he had just read with deep interest, and he earnestly urged me to read it. Thus it so happened that our latest talk was merely a light chat about new books; for after that night I never saw Lord Randolph Churchill.

END OF VOL. I.